OCTOBER 16, 1972 — No. 1077
28TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

CHRISTIAN WEEKLY

CALVINIST-CONTACT

P.O. BOX 312, STATION B, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

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GOSPEL BY CABLE

About a year ago an unexpected avenue to proclaim the Gospel opened for us. Oh surely, it has given us many problems which we never faced before, but it also gave us opportunities which we never had before. Let me tell you what I am talking about.

Not too long after my arrival in St. Catharines, I received a phone call from a man who told me that he was the manager of the local Cable T.V. Company. He had just arrived in St. Catharines as well and since he was a member of the Christian Reformed Church he asked me to come to his office to discuss the possibilities of becoming involved in actual television programming. I could not believe my ears, but I was excited to say the least, and I immediately discussed this matter with my colleague here and the principals of our two christian schools. They were also excited and full of expectation I went to see the manager of the T.V. station.

The manager, Mr. De Jong, informed me of government stipulations regarding cable T.V., and one of these stipulations was the necessity to set aside one channel for local programming. In St. Catharines channel eight had been set aside for that kind of programming. I was anxious to know what local programming involved and I asked Mr. De Jong to explain what he meant. He assured me anything that local people could present for local interest would be telecast free on channel eight. Moreover, the programs did not necessarily have to be produced locally, neither did local people have to make an appearance on the screen, nor did programs have to relate to local happenings. As long as a local committee, or for that matter a person, would be willing to come with something that is of local interest.

Well that opened all kinds of possibilities, and with the help of several people of our christian community we accepted the challenge to somehow get a half an hour program ready on a weekly basis. We even were promised prime time and indeed since January until the summer months we have shown a program every Monday as well as Wednesday evening.

To give you an idea of what we did let me copy part of the report which was given to the members of our churches in our city:

> Yes! Regular programs have been prepared since January 1972. They were telecast every Monday and Wednesday under the title Viewsbeat.
>
> Programs included:
>
> a. meditations, choir singing.
>
> b. guitar groups, organ recital.
>
> c. "talk shows" about education, family, the labour scene.
>
> d. drama and slide show commentaries.
>
> At times, the preparations were hectic. Have you ever considered what goes into the making of a program: We didn't know either but we are learning!
>
> No, the quality of production compares poorly with the million dollar jobs you see on commercial T.V. Our programs reflect primitive resources in finances, technical skill and visual artistic competence. We hope to improve.
>
> Yet, we are certain that the Gospel must be heard and seen in the wide scope of life itself. Today, the Lord gives us channel 8. Dare we ask for more?
>
> The Committee proposes to continue this Gospel Outreach.

Indeed at the end of September we were able to fontinue this important work. We consider it a privilege and calling given to us by our Lord. We have learned a little and we want to learn much more.

We also hope that the same outreach will happen in other communities. It should be possible to make this a nationwide project where we can help each other with programming, production, suggestions etc. I truly hope that one or more congregations will consider this possibility as a goal in the Thrust strategy. If there is cable T.V. in your area, please look into the possibilities and if there is anything at all that could be done please let us know. Undoubtedly we can be of mutual help.

We live in the time of T.V. viewing. In many places cable T.V. is used and will be used by more and more people. It is the thing of the future in T.V. especially there where only one or two stations can be reached via the ordinary antenna. If we can make this means of communication an instrument to spread the Gospel in a fresh, contemporary way, what an opportunities will open up to praise the Name of our God and to make a christian contribution to the world of today.

Again if you can help us or if we can be of help to you, get in touch with us. You can write me and I will see to it that your communication gets into the hands of the committee.

Rev. Henry R. De Bolster,
8 Baraniuk St.
St. Catharines, Ont.
phone 934-2815

"THEY ALSO SERVE"

*by Richard R. Tiemersma**

Recently, after some twenty years of neglect, I renewed my acquaintance with Browning's *Pippa Passes*, the heroine of which, a little girl, goes singing through the streets of her small Italian town and, quite unconscious of what she is doing, brings about tremendous changes in the lives of those who hear her. One of Pippa's songs begins *"All service ranks the same with God"* and ends with words *"God's puppets, best and worst are we; there is no last nor first."*

One might wish to quarrel with Browning's characterization of mankind as "God's puppets"; but the first and the last clauses of this song have a familiar ring to the Calvinist.

I was reminded that one of the real contributions of the Protestant Reformation was the affirming, once more, of the prophetic, priestly, and kingly office of all believers. A corollary to this reaffirmation was the rediscovery of the fact that whatever is offered to the Lord in gratitude and humility is acceptable and pleasing in His sight.

There is, of course, nothing particularly novel about this concept; Scripture, both the Old and the New Testament, clearly teaches it. The psalmist notes that, although God abhors the bullocks and the burnt oxen of those who are not truly penitent, He will not despise the broken and the contrite heart. Our Lord accepted not only the gold, frankincense, and myrrh of the Magi but also the five loaves and two fishes of a little Hebrew boy, and with the latter performed the miracle of the feeding of the thousands. The widow's mite, it will be recalled, received special commendation from Christ; and it was not the costliness of the alabaster box of ointment, but the spirit in which it was offered that touched the heart of Jesus.

But, somehow, the Church of the Middle Ages had lost sight of the truth that, as Pippa puts it, "All service ranks the same with God," and established a hierarchy of values to be placed on various kinds of service. At the lowest level was the "mill," the service performed by the laborer and the artisan. Somewhat higher was the "acre," discipleship as practiced by the various teaching and preaching orders. And at the very peak was the "bed of repose," where the soul lay in passive contemplation of God — a level presumably reserved for only the purest spirits.

Obviously, this view places a premium on the more euclesiastically oriented vocations and consciously or unconsciously, elevates mental activity — as somehow more "spiritual" — above the physical. A former professor of mine once observed that this view of "Christian service" is not entirely alien to our thinking even in the twentieth century. Witness the term "full-time Christian service" in evangelical circles. One begins with Christian-school teaching, which is on the perimeter of the circle to which a person is "called" (teaching in a Christian college and, especially, in a seminary, is — it goes without saying — in the inner ring of this perimetric circle). Vocation (in the root sense of the word) becomes more audible when one is called to the ministry; and, at least in the Reformed community in which I was reared, the very center of full-time service to be found on the foreign mission field.

Notwithstanding certain modifications of this view during our generation, the feeling still exists among us, and, especially in an academic community (a "community of scholars," as we sometimes like to style ourselves), one occasionally senses a kind of intellectual snobbery dangerously akin to spiritual pride.

A simple story by the Nobel Prize winner Anatole France contains a salutary reminder that even the lowliest gift, if offered in humility and love, is not to be despised and, indeed, may perhaps be more acceptable to God than some gifts that require a great deal more of erudition and sophistication. The story is "The Juggler of Our Lady." It concerns a certain Barnabas, an itinerant French juggler who, after a particularly hard day in an unusually unprofitable season, encountered a monk on the road. A man of deep piety, Barnabas was so impressed by the monk's account of monastic life that he entered the monastery himself and looked forward to spending his remaining days in the service of the Virgin Mother, to the celebration of whom this particular order was dedicated.

Once settled in the monastery, however, Barnabas felt woefully out of place. He was surrounded by monks whose talents seemed especially appropriate to their vocation. The Prior composed learned treatises in praise of the Virgin, and Frier Maurice transcribed them artifully on vellum sheets. Friar Alexander painted miniatures of the Virgin surrounded by the symbols of her exalted station. Frier Marbode worked ceaselessly at carving the figure of the Virgin in stone, and he was so strong and full of joy, notwithstanding his advanced years, that he was clearly under the Virgin's special protection. Besides these, there were the poets, who wrote hymns and recorded in verse and in beautiful prose the miracles of the Virgin.

"Seeing such a competition in praises and such a beautiful harvest of work," the author tells us, "Barnabas lamented his ignorance and his simplicity." Convinced that he had nothing to offer the mother of our Lord, he became despondent. Then, one night, he heard the monks tell of a religious man whose only talent had been his ability to recite the Ave Maria and who, in consequence, had been held in contempt by his fellows. But at his death five roses, representing the five letters of *Maria*, had risen from his mouth.

Barnabas marveled at the kindness of the Virgin to this ignorant man, but he was not consoled, since his own love could find no suitable means of expression. One morning, however, he got up from his pallet, ran joyfully to the chapel, and stayed there alone until after dinner. From that time on he spent his time in the chapel while the other monks were busy with their special tasks, and his days and nights were filled with happiness. The prior, curious concerning both Barnabas' activities and his new-found joy, decided to see how Barnabas was spending his time and, accompanied by two senior monks, spied through the cracks of the chapel door when Barnabas next went on his mysterious mission.

To their amazement, they saw Barnabas, on his bank before the altar, juggling six balls and twelve knives in honor of the Virgin. The elders gasped at the sacrilege; and the Prior himself, although not so shocked as they, was sure that Barnabas had gone insane. They were about to drag him from the chapel, when they saw the statue of the Virgin leave the pedestal on which it was mounted, descend the stairs of the altar, and with a fold of its mantle wipe the perspiration from the juggler's brow.

Then the prior knelt with his face on the marble slabs of the floor and said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

And the elders replied, "Amen."

*Notes from a chapel talk at Calvin College, Dr. Tiemersma is professor of English at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Jan.
Rev. J. W. Van Weelden
17 Tweedsmuir Ave. S.
Chatham, Ont.

THE GARDEN OF OPTIMISM, nine acres ofland with a 5,000-square-foot fibreglass greenhouse, is operated by the Lethbridge Association for Mentally Retarded. Pictured here are Dove Allen (front) and L. J. Wright, executive director of the association, with staff and trainees at the nursery. The project has no equal in Canada. When Mr. Allen, now manager of the ranch, who has been in the greenhouse profession all his life, heard that the association was acquiring land to operate a workshop but was uncertain as to what type, he recalled a cousin who was retarded and enjoyed working with flowers. So he suggested a greenhouse which opened in November, 1969. Today there are 22 trainees at the gardens, and applications have come from families all the way from Montana, U.S.A. to Fort McMurray. Last Christmas $2,000 worth of mums were sold at a market in Lethbridge and plans for the future call for a full line of greenhouse products for the retail market. As it grows by a projected 80 acres, it will be a pioneering development of new lives to justify its complete name, Sunrise Ranch.

(Photo by Mike Niegele)

ORGAN CONCERT

AT 8:00 P.M. SAT., OCT. 28, 1972

By Leendert Kooy A.R.C.T.

The concert will be held on the magnificent Pipe Organ of the Willowdale United Church in Willowdale, Ontario. Willowdale United Church is located on Kenneth Ave., behind the Northtown Shopping Center. (just south of Finch)

Free admission. Plenty of free parking.

Op fieringen Fan it Fleurige Fryske stik

"De dubele Marianne"

of

"De Faem en de jierpel"

blyspul yntrije bidriuwen Fan Abe Brouwer

27 October yn Jarvis
Community Hall,

28 October yn Bowmanville
Christian High School

1 November yn Strathroy
Colborne Public Skoalle

3 November yn Woodbridge
Toronto District Chr. High School
Eight Ave.

Opbringst Foar goede doeleinen

Foar Mear Informatie — M. de Vries — R.R. 4 — Simcoe, Ont.
443-8010

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 19	Fall Rally of the Chr. Ref. Ladies Soc. of the S.W. Ontario League, Chr. Ref. Church, St. Thomas, 10:30 a.m. Guest speaker, Rev. J. Nutma.
October 19	P.T.A. Hamilton District Chr. High School, school auditorium, Athens St. Rev. J. Kuntz will speak on "The Spiritual development of our adolescents.
October 20	The Ambassadors "in concert" Kitchener Chr. Ref. Church
October 21	The Ambassadors, Grimsby Chr. Ref. Church.
Oct. 23	8:00 p.m., formal dedication of pipe organ in First Chr. Ref. Church of Hamilton, Ont., Charlton and Hess Streets.
Oct. 28	ORGAN CONCERT at 8:00 p.m. in the Willowdale United Church in Willowdale, Ont. Organist Mr. Leendert Kooy A.R.C.T. Free Admission.
October 28	Community Concert in Saltfleet High School, Stoney Creek, Ont., 8 p.m. Special guest: Barbershop Chorus "The Knights of Harmony".
October 28	Bazaar for the John Knox Chr. School, Brampton, Ont., 2.00 p.m. — 7.00 p.m. Presented by the United School Fund.
November 3	8:00 p.m., The C.R.W.R.C. presents the films "Mission of Mercy" and "Inasmuch" in the "Riverside" C.R.C., Wellandport, Ont.
November 10	8:00 p.m., The Ambassadors in concert in the York C.R.C.
Nov. 25	Frisian Evening in Bowmanville, Ont. Further information follows per advertisement.
November 25	"Annual Bazaar of the Calvin Christian School of Hamilton, Ont. at the Hamilton District Christian High School. Sponsored by the Willing Workers."

Opfiering Fan it Fryske blyspul
"De dûbele Marianne"

27 Oct. — Jarvis
28 Oct. — Bowmanville
1 Nov. — Strathroy
3 Nov. — Woodbridge

Oare plakken dy A bilang hawwe skreauw as belje — M. Devries
R.R. 4, Simcoe — (519) 443-8010

Meetings Can. Home Bible League

Speaker: Mr. John Vander Boom,

October 17	Vancouver, B.C.
October 18	Richmond, B.C.
October 19	Haney, B.C.
October 20	Langley, B.C.
October 23	Duncan, B.C.
October 24	Ladner, B.C.
October 25	Meeting of the combined Evangelism Committees of the greater Vancouver area to be held in the Burnaby C.R.C., Burnaby, B.C.

REFORMED FELLOWSHIP CHRISTIAN EDUCATION RALLIES

Speaker: Dr. Peter Y. DeJong. Theme: "Reformation and the Educational Crisis"

October 30	TORONTO, Second Christian Reformed Church, 265 Albion Rd., Rexdale.
October 31	HAMILTON, First Christian Reformed Church, 181 Charlton Ave. W.
November 1	LONDON, First Christian Church of London, 513 Talbot St.
November 2	THUNDER BAY. Reformed Fellowship Rally. Speakers: Rev. L. T. Schalkwyk and Rev. J. T. Tangelder. Theme: "How reliable are those Bible Stories?" First Chr. Ref. Church.

Church Announcements

CHR. REF. CHURCH

Called to

Grimsby, Ont. (as second minister) Rev. C. D. Tuyl of Oshawa, Ont. (Hebron).

to Kemptville, Ont. Cand. J. Visser, Crapaud, Prince Edward Island.

Declined

for Ottawa-West (Calvin CRC): Rev. M. Jorritsma, Grand Rapids, Mich.

for Aylmer, Ont. and Belleville, Ont., Rev. J. J. Hoytema of Grimsby Ont.

CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

Called

to Burlington-West, Ont., Rev. W. W. J. Van Oene of Fergus-Guelph, Ont.

Declined

for Hamilton, Ont., Rev. J. Mulder of Cloverdale, B.C.

INSTALLATION
REV. D. J. TIGCHELAAR

On Thursday evening, Sept. 21, 1972, Canada David J. Tigchelaar was ordained as minister of the Emmanuel Christian Reformed Church of Cornwall, Ont.

Rev. Tigchelaar was with us as our interim Pastor since early March 1972, just 3 months after Rev. A. Dreise left for New Market. As a congregation we are thankfull to the Lord that He provided us with a Pastor again.

Rev. J. De Pater of Williamsburg, Ont., our counseler was in charge of the evening Scripture reading and the Sermon was delivered by our previous Minister Rev. A. Dreise.

The reading of the ordination form was done by Rev. J. De Pater.

Charge to the new ordained minister was done by Rev. A. Velthoen from Renfrew, Ont., and the charge to the congregation was done by Rev. A. Dreise.

Elder Y. Joustra spoke on behalf of the consistory and the congregation and the Elder J. Vander Veer led in a concluding prayer.

Delegates from the ministerial association of Cornwall, Classis and neighboring churches welcomed our new minister.

Solos were sang by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Forrester-Tigchelaar.

After the service, coffee was served in the downstairs hall where everyone had an opportunity to welcome our new minister

Clerk J. Vander Veer.

OTTAWA REPORT

The Election

by Norman Campbell
Parliamentary Press Gallery

(Canadian Scene) — Around a quarter of a million naturalized Canadians of non-British birth will be eligible for the first time to vote in the forthcoming federal election.

In a half dozen or so constituencies, chiefly in the metropolitan areas which attract the bulk of newcomers to Canada, these voters are the targets for special campaigning by Liberals, Progressive Conservatives and New Democrats.

The ethnic vote will assume a higher importance than it has held in other federal campaigns. Immigrants and the children of immigrants make up a larger percentage of the 13 million or so on the voters' lists than ever before.

Since January, 1968, more than 285,000 citizenship certificates have been granted. However, nearly 70,000 of these have been granted to British subjects who, under the present Election Act, are eligible to vote after five years' residence in Canada whether or not they acquire citizenship certificates. This is likely to be the last federal election in which those who have not acquired Canadian citizenship will be able to vote. On June 30, 1975, Canadian citizenship will be required of all.

In addition to those granted citizenship since 1968, the children of many granted it earlier will be able to vote because of the reduction of the voting age to 18. There were 10,861,000 on the 1968 voters' lists. Now, because of the vote for 18-year-olds and the granting of citizenship certificates, the lists will likely pass 13 million.

It is no secret that what is referred to as "the ethnic vote" has generally favoured the Liberals, one reason being that the highest tide of post-war immigration was reached under Liberal regimes. However, provincial elections in Alberta and Ontario have shown that this may no longer be an assured fact. The New Democrats always got a substantil share of the ethnic vote, but in the two provincial elections previously mentioned there were signs that the Conservatives have been cultivating it seccessfully.

The effect of the Trudeau drive towards bilingualism on the ethnic voters is a question that puzzles the politicians. The requirement for bilingualism in many Public Service positions really means that ethnics interested in keeping alive their own language traditions have to be tri-lingual to aspire to higher positions in the Public Service.

As the election campaign got under way, there were indications that the real fighting grounds will be Ontario and British Columbia where general belief has it that the Liberals have slipped. If the Progressive Conservatives and the NDP could pick up 30 or 35 Liberal seats in Ontario, then the Liberals could hardly do better than form a minority government.

There are 264 seats in the House of Commons. At least 135 are required for a working majority. At dissolution the Liberals, who elected 155 in 1968, had a standing of 148 in the Commons. There were 73 Conservatives (up one from 1968), 25 NDP (up three) and 13 Social Crediters (down one). There were two independents and three vacancies.

NEW CLERK
CLARKSON CRC

The new clerk of the Clarkson Chr. Ref. Church is Mr. P. De Hooge, 145 Morrison Rd., Oakville, Ont.

•

NEW CLERK
ESSEX CHR. REF. CHURCH

The new clerk of the Essex Chr. Ref. Church is Mr. John Klaas, R.R. 1 Essex, Ont. Phone 839-4086.

•

NEW CLERK
CHR. REF. CHURCH JARVIS ONT

The address of the new clerk of the above church is: Mr. Louis Bill, R.R. 1 Jarvis, Ont. Phone (519) 587-2667.

A Subscription to Calvinist-Contact is an appreciated present for many occasions.

Moderator of Dutch Church Objects to WCC Decision to Withdraw Investments From Southern Africa

(Grand Rapids) Dr. A. Kruyswijk, moderator of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and president of the National Council of Churches in the Netherlands, expressed in Gereformeerd Weekblad his objections against the August decision of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches to withdraw investments from southern Africa.

While recognizing the good intentions of the WCC plan to withdraw funds for the purpose is to assist the non-whites along their difficult path to attain the rights of free men in the full sense of the word—Dr. Kruyswijk objected to the decision on the following counts:

1. The various situations in different parts of southern Africa are all lumped together in an uncritical way.

2. The WCC discriminates between what it says concerning the Soviet Union and the Republic of South Africa. The World Council would not make a declaration on Soviet Russia without first giving the Russian delegates an opportunity to speak. At the meeting of the Central Committee, Bishop Zulu of South Africa was present and distanced himself from the proposals. But when Dr. Kruyswijk asked the chairman after the Bishop had left what objections Bishop Zulu had against the proposals the reqeust was refused.

3. The entire affair had a touch of paternalism: the whites from the previous colonial nations and the non-whites who have obtained control of their own lands issued a declaration concerning the liberation of a people which was not represented and whose delegate had indicated that he could not agree with the proposal.

4. The proposal to withdraw investments in the Republic of South Africa in order to help the non-whites will have the opposite effect, namely to push the non-whites further into the mire by retarding white industry and thus causing greater unemployment among the non-whites.

5. A better measure could be found in the present situation, namely, to support the non-white financially with the means of existence in order to limit the dehumanizing migratory labor.

6. At no time in the discussion of the Central Committee were the South African whites considered to be brothers in Christ. "If the decision had been taken with the visible agreement of those whom they tried to help, as being the best way in the present circumstances, then I would have agreed with the decision, provided that in prayer the whites of South Africa had also been mentioned with an eye for the precarious position in which they have been since 300 years ago," said Dr. Kruyswijk. (RES)

Als U C.C. Waardeert — help ons dan door het aanbrengen van een of meer abonnees!

We belonen Uw medewerking gaarne met een premieboekje.

Members of the Chr. Ref. Ladies Societies of the South Western Ontario League
come to our inspiring

FALL RALLY

to be held in the Chr. Ref. Church of St. Thomas
320 Elm Street
on October 19, starting at 10:30 a.m. D.V.
Our guest speaker, Rev. J. Nutma will speak on
"Geloofszekerheid"
in the afternoon we will hear and see about the latest developments on our Mission field in Honduras
Truly a meeting we will not want to miss!
Come and bring a friend.

GALT, KITCHENER, DRAYTON, GUELPH
EXETER, ACTON, STRATFORD, LISTOWEL

CLINTON — BLYTHE

THE AMBASSADORS

HAMILTON DISTRICT MALE CHORUS

In Concert

KITCHENER C.R.C. FRI., OCT. 20

Adults: $2.00 — 8:20 p.m.
Students $1.00

FRUITLAND, GRIMSBY, BEAMSVILLE
HAMILTON, DUNDAS, BRANTFORD

ST. CATHARINES — BURLINGTON

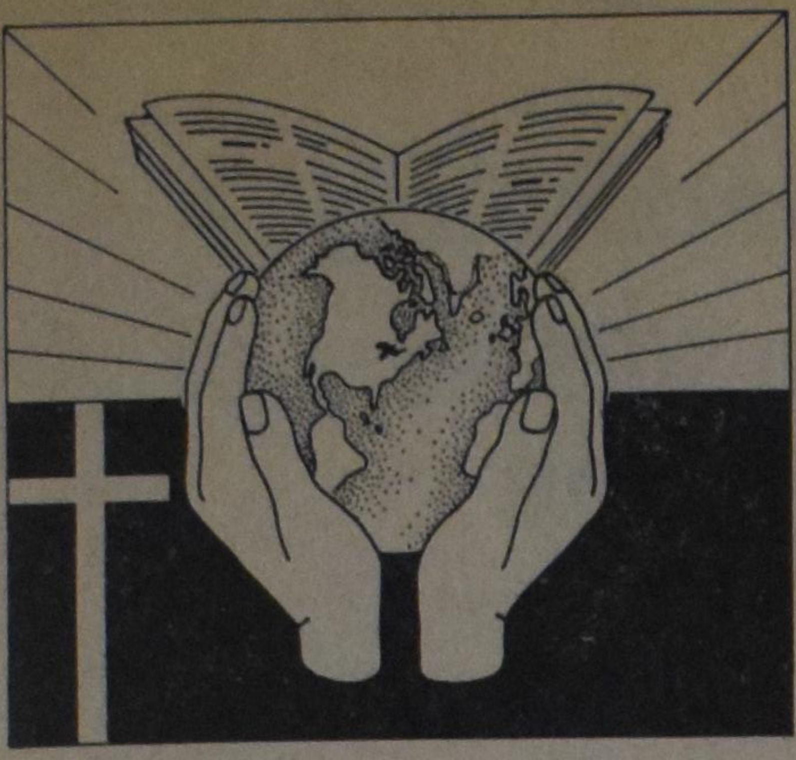
THE AMBASSADORS

HAMILTON DISTRICT MALE CHORUS

In Concert

GRIMSBY C.R.C. SAT., OCT. 21

Adults: $2.00 — 8:20 p.m.
Students $1.00



BLASHHEMY

Election time is a time of selling, not of goods, not even of services, but of selling people.

People in the U.S. know what this means and people in Canada are daily confronted with it, since both countries are in the midst of an election campaign.

It is surprising to see how far people can go in telling others how good they are themselves and in belittling the other candidate. It is often far removed from what the apostle Paul said to the Philippians ..."be humble toward each other, never thinking you're better than others."

We have heard that so many times, that we are getting used to it. However, there are limits to what a person may say in order to promote his own cause, and these limits may not be trespassed. A friendly reader sent us a clipping from the Kitchener-Waterloo Recorder about what the prime minister of Canada had said in a meeting with high school students in Regina, Sask. One of the students asked Mr. Trudeau what had happened to the Liberal's promise four years ago of a "just society", according to this clipping.

If the quotation of the Kitchener-Waterloo Recorder is correct, then Mr. Trudeau replied that the next time this student would see Jesus Christ he should ask Him what happened to the just society he promised 2,000 years ago.

This reply may sound quite whitty and the students laughed about it, but we cannot explain it differently than this is open blasphemy. It may be so that Mr. Trudeau, although he is known as a serious Roman Catholic, does not have an idea of the character of the "just society" for which the Son of God came to this planet. Most likely the prime minister was referring to the Kingdom of God, which was the heart of Jesus' ministry. And the Kingdom of God differs indeed from the "just society" Mr. Trudeau had in mind when he became the head of the Canadian government four years ago.

But even if he does not see the difference between the Kingdom of God and the Liberal government of Canada, that does not give Mr. Trudeau the right to make this comparison. The former prime minister John Diefenbaker called the statement by Mr. Trudeau "revolting and an insult to Christians."

It seems to us that more is at stake here than just an insult to Christians. It is an insult to Jesus Christ Himself. And this insult is made in order to attract votes in the coming election.

Mr. Diefenbaker said in an interview that such a statement is "sacrelegious if not blasphemous." "It is a statement that no prime minister in history has made and is indicative of an attitude of mind not in keeping with what one expects of a prime minister."

We believe that the statement by Mr. Trudeau deserves a sharper criticism than what Mr. Diefenbaker has said.

D.F.

The Next Issues of Calvinist-Contact

will be DATED	will be MAILED	Closing time for ADVERTISEMENTS
Oct. 16	Oct. 13	Oct. 11 noon
Oct. 23	Oct. 20	Oct. 18 noon
Oct. 30	Oct. 27	Oct. 25 noon
Nov. 6	Nov. 3	Nov. 1 noon

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All communications should be addressed to the office of Calvinist-Contact, P.O. Box 312, Station B, Hamilton, Ont.

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NEW ADDRESS: Mountain Plaza, HAMILTON
(Upper James & Fennell)
Phone 385-5851

THE PROBLEM OF WORK

(II)

(By THEODORE PLANTINGA)

Unemployment

The Calvinist ethic tells us that man must work to be a man, and the capitalist ethic tells us that work is the generation of income. What, then, is a man to think of himself if he cannot get a job? Not much, apparently. In a society dominated by the Calvinist ethic and the capitalist ethic, prolonged unemployment inevitably leads to a loss of self-respect and confidence. This was strikingly illustrated during the depression of the 1930's, when millions of men were unemployed in North America. For many men, it was all but impossible to get a job, and thus they could hardly be blamed for being unemployed. Yet many of these unemployed men did blame themselves and were very reluctant to accept welfare. The same self-approach, lack of confidence, and reluctance to accept welfare afflicts many of those thrown out of work in the more recent economic recession. For those who take the Calvinist ethic and the capitalist ethic seriously, unemployment is much harder on the spirit than on the pocketbook.

Governments are often warned about the social and psychic effects of unemployment, but it is not easy to create new and meaningful jobs. Many thinkers are concluding that our society can never again provide paid employment for virtually everyone who wants it, and that a high rate of unemployment is built into our automated, computerized society. But those who do not work must nevertheless receive an income somehow, it is recognized, if only to stave off revolution. The present welfare system is a cumbersome and degrading way to distribute income to the needy, and therefore many politicians and thinkers are advocating a guaranteed annual income, which might be administered by those who collect income taxes and thus have access to information about income. Such schemes are receiving growing support from conservatives, liberals and socialists, and it probably will not be long before some guaranteed annual income scheme is implemented in North America.

Yet there is deep-rooted opposition to the idea of a guaranteed annual income, for it is regarded as revolutionary by those who adhere to the Calvinist ethic and the capitalist ethic. It is because of this opposition that writers and intellectuals are preaching that we must abandon the Protestant work ethic and cultivate a "Mediterranean spirit". They tell us that we must not attach too much importance to work, that we must accept our guaranteed annual income without feeling guilty about it, and that we must focus our lives on leisure activities and personal interests. They paint what appears to be a dream society and tell us that it is just around the corner. But is it really a dream society? Can man live a meaningful life without work? Must the Calvinist ethic be abandoned? In the second article in this series of three, I will go further into the question of what work is and what is not work, in the hope of providing the beginnings of an answer to these questions.

What is work?

One answer to the question 'What is work?' has already been provided in the previous article. According to what I have called the capitalist ethic, work is generating income, "making money". But this view of work is a relatively recent development that rarely comes to direct expression. Before money and capital came to play such a dominant role in our society, no one thought of defining work in such terms.

The capital-ist view of work must be rejected, for at least two reasons. First, there are some ways of generating regular income that cannot be regarded as work. And second, there are some kinds of work that bring in no income. As an example of the former, one might point to the activities of organized crime. Extortion and "protection" rackets can hardly be regarded as work — although they do involve effort and planning — but they yield a handsome inome nonetheless. There are activities in the business world which, though not formally illegal, serve only to defraud the consumer of his hard earned money, and these activities should no more be regarded as work than organized crime.

In refusing to dignify certain money-making schemes with the name 'work', I am of course appealing to service as a criterion for work. (I will return to this point later.) Just as income can be had without work, there is work without inome. The first example that comes to mind is the work of the housewife. There are also many important jobs, especially in private agencies and organizations, that are non-paying. Most of these are part-time jobs, for the simple reason that all but the independently wealthy must have time left over to earn an income to support themselves. But these non-paying, part-time jobs are work nevertheless, as their holders will gladly explain.

Karl Marx would certainly agree that not every way of generating income counts as work. In his analysis of industrial society, he pointed to one large class of people who enjoyed substantial incomes but did no work to earn those incomes — the capitalists. By successfully enslaving the working class, the capitalists accumulate more capital in their own hands. They then use this capital to create more and more profits, paying the workers the bare minimum in wages. These capitalists do no work, Marx complained, but they take the lion's share of the profits. In Marx's thinking, then, the capitalists are parasites, taking much and contributing nothing. There would be no place for them in a communist order.

Marx is sometimes accused of confusing management with ownership, for in a capitalist economy some of the capitalists (i.e. owners of capital and, thereby, of the industrial enterprise) work as managers and executives in the firms that they own. The Marxist answer to this is that management and ownership should be separated. The "means of production" should be owned by the people — which in practice means the state — while the managers of the industrial enterprise are appointed strictly on the basis of ability.

But Marx did not turn his attention to the problem of work only because workers in his time were being exploited. It would be a mistake to view Marx as a forerunner of today's labour leaders who demand that workers be better compensated for their drudgery through a greater share of the profits of industry, a shorter work week, longer vacations, and so on. Marx would probably view many of the demands of modern labour leaders as missing the heart of the problem, i.e. the nature of work itself. For Marx, the relation between the worker and his employer in modern industry was not simply a bad bargain; it was a desecration of something sacred. As an atheist, Marx professed not to believe in the holy, but if anything was holy in his view of man and society it was work. It was because he so heavily emphasized the importance of work and its centrality in human life that he has become perhaps the greatest theorist of work.

Interaction with nature

For Marx, work is not one of the most important things in life; it is life itself. Human life is a constant interaction with nature. We appropriate materials from nature, shape them to our own use, and sometimes make them part of our bodies by eating them. Animals also interact with nature and are sustained by it, but their life activities differ in kind from man's. Man does not simply look for plants and animals to eat when he becomes hungry; he **organizes** and **plans** his quest for food and life's other necessities. He studies natural forces and learns to use them to his own advantage. He constructs tools and instruments to mediate between himself and nature. By means of his tools, he gradually changes his life environment, altering his circumstances to make a more cultivated life possible.

Marx' ideas

Man, for Marx, is a rational creature with the ability to anticipate and plan his own future, but he is not defined by his rationality. It is when man begins to produce the means for his existence that he becomes truly man and lifts himself above the animals. Work, then, is not a necessary evil or something that makes leisure and enjoyment possible; work is man's "self-realization". Only to the degree that man is a worker is he truly man.

This view of work prevails in communist societies, which are dominated by Marxist thinking, and hence these societies try to get everyone to work. The high unemployment that is common in capitalist countries would be intolerable in a Marxist society. The issue in unemployment, on the Marxist view, is not simply that men lose their income — for the loss can be made good from other sources, and usually is, even in capitalist countries — but that they lose the opportunity to be full human beings, realizing their humanity by producing food and other necessities for life. Many communists actually believe that work is good for people, and thus we often hear of doctors, lawyers and even communist party workers being sent to the country to work on the soil. Being sent to the farm is not necessarily a degredation, for Marxists profess that such work is good for everyone.

These "back to the soil" programs might lead one to wonder whether what lawyers and bureaucrats do counts as work on the communist view. The answer to this question seems to be both yes and no. The complex society of a modern communist country is possible only because of extensive specialization and division of labour. The result of this is the emergence of a class of "workers" whose work is far removed from the basics of producing food and other necessities for life. Because few communists want to return to a primitive agricultural society, such specialists are tolerated and treated as workers. Yet, the force of Marx's vision of work as primary interaction with nature lingers on, with the result that the specialists and professionals are occasionally sent out to the country to find out what "real work" is.

This dilemma with regard to work is only one of the ways in which the application of Marx's ideas to the governing of a modern communist society leads to problems and contradictions. Many communists deal with such problems by speaking not of 'Marxism" but of "Marxism-Leninism", emphasizing that Lenin updated Marx on many such points and made his thought applicable to the twentieth century. Scholars in the west, however, have relatively little interest in Lenin, although their interest in Marx is very high. Thus they regularly use Marx's own writings (without Lenin's interpretation and application) against the communist world, pointing out that Marx condemned many of the features of today's communist societies. (In much the same way, the Bible is used against the church by its enemies.)

Many academics in the western world today who write about Marx have fallen in love with Marxist thinking, and therefore it is a pleasant change to encounter one who has not. The Dutch Catholic philosopher William Luijpen regards Marx's thinking on work as valuable, but he criticizes Marx's definition of work as too narrow. In his **Nieuwe inleiding tot de existentiële fenomenologie** Luijpen writes: "Despite the original element in Marx's definition of work, his description of it is not

(Continued on page 4)

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THE PROBLEM OF WORK

(Continued from page 3)

sufficiently broad and flexible to be applicable to work as we know it in our own day. Marx only had an eye for the kinds of work most evident in his own day, namely, the production of material goods. But this is only a 'beginning'." Production may be work in a primary sense, but there is a good deal more to the world of work. Luijpen goes on to say: "Only when work in the narrower sense reaches a particular level of productivity does it become possible to participate in science and art, in sports and games, and to render various kinds of human care to persons. 'Production', thus, is always a necessary condition for those modes of human self-realization that do not themselves consist in bringing forth material goods" (p. 293).

Luijpen proceeds from an existential-phenomenological standpoint which claims to incorporate the insights of many diverse thinkers. Such an approach runs the risk of including too much, and thus one might wonder whether Luijpen regards all human activities as work and self-realization, for he tells us that "Whenever productive work makes integral human self-realization possible, we must maintain that from that 'moment' every mode of human self-realization can be called work and actually becomes work." But he quickly adds: "There remains a difference between working and being occupied, between work time and free time, but under certain conditions any kind of keeping busy can become work, and any kind of work can become the expenditure of free time. . . . On this point, in particular, the limits are very unsure . . ." (p. 295). In other words, what is work for one man may be recreation or a hobby for another. In this respect work is very hard to pin down. This feature of work has complicated discussions of what it means to refrain from work on Sunday, as the fourth commandment demands.

Roman Catholic and Protestant Interpretation

Luijpen does not seek the criterion for what counts as work within the activity itself but in the purpose behind the activity. Work, on his view, is a matter of meeting needs: "Working is being occupied within the framework of the provision of needs. These needs are not exclusively bodily. Because needs vary with the phases of history, particular ways of being occupied **become** work. Where **not one** need is being met, there is no work being done." (p. 296).

Luijpen is a Christian thinker, and thus he emerges with a view of work quite different from those of the capitalist (work as "making money") and the communist (work as the production of material goods). On Luijpen's view, work is the meeting of needs — in a word, service. In rendering service to his fellow man — and thereby to God—man realizes himself; he fulfills the purpose for which he was created. Such a Christian definition of work also serves as the foundation for a critique of work in our society. If work is a matter of meeting needs, then many occupations and revenue-producing operations must be called into question. We must ask, for example, whether we really need still more nuclear weapons to protect us from potential enemies. If not, the building of such weapons is not work but only a money-making scheme. There are salesmen who sell products in the full realization that the product they are selling meets no real need and will be of no benefit to the buyer. These salesmen generally receive larger incomes than most of us, but in the strict Christian sense of the term "work", they do not work for their money.

Defenders of such shady activities might respond with the question: Who is to decide what counts as a real need and what does not? Luijpen has an answer to that question, but it is an answer that reveals the **Catholic** side of his thinking. He tells us that ". . . work presupposes a social 'must' which, in the final analysis, is imposed by the needs. The man who works undertakes that which, given the needs, **must** come about. Thus he cannot decide for himself when and where his work begins and ends. This 'must' is socially regulated, sometimes through an official work-system and sometimes through co-operative social obligations that lie outside the official work-system." (p. 296).

I must take issue with this answer, which reflects a Catholic hierarchical view of society, in favour of a Protestant emphasis on individual responsibility. Freedom in a Christian context is first of all freedom to serve, and this involves a decision about what the needs are and how pressing they are. In many cases there is no real dispute about the needs; society is and always will be in need of food, health care, basic education, and so on. But for many a Christian trying to find his way in the modern world, the question of the needs and their urgency relative to one another poses a real problem. A young man interested in foreign missions might ask himself whether he should instead devote his life's work to the attempt to found a Christian university in North America. Is there really a need for a Christian university? Who is to decide this question? Must he rely on the judgment of his parents or his church? He should definitely seek their advice, but the decision is his own, and he will have to answer for it. But even if he makes the wrong decision, seeing a need where there is none, we must nevertheless regard his activity as work. Not every attempt to serve and to meet needs is successful. And although we must also make judgments about the fruitfulness and effectiveness of work, success is not itself the criterion for deciding what counts as work and what does not.

Work as Service

If the way that we use words is an accurate reflection of our thinking, it appears that very few people think of work as service. Most of us use the word "work" to denote both what persons do and what machines do when they take the place of persons. But do machines really work? It cannot be denied that they can and do perform certain functions that persons perform, but does the performance of such functions qualify as work? Many people would be inclined to say that it does, but I would argue for the negative position. The human body is animated in a strange and wonderful way (that no words seem adequate to describe) by a mind or act centre. The mind is somehow involved in voluntary physical actions, directing, controlling and planning them. Routine actions require less conscious direction by the mind than complicated or new actions, but to some degree the mind is present in all voluntary physical actions. Now, it would be short-sighted to regard work as a purely physical action or series of actions. The mental side of work is also more important; the more complicated a task is, the more important planning and decision making become. Machines and computers programmed to respond in certain ways (some of them highly complex) to specific stimuli and situations are not thereby thinking or making decisions. Unless it can be established that computers are actually capable of **thinking** (which is not to be equated with calculating), we will have no reason to believe that machines **work** in the strict sense of the term.

Another way of expressing the point that I am trying to make is to say there is a **managerial** side to work. This is a term which Hendrik Hart uses to describe work in an essay on "Alienation" (in **Labor Problems in Christian Perspective**, ed. John Redekop). Hart tells us that ". . . every job and every task is managerial in character. Each is a phase of man's dominion over the earth. This means that no man has or should have a human master. Managing is not the work of a few men but the task of all. All men are to be workers and their work is managerial. And within the various ministries of work there are functional divisions which are dictated not by the relationship in which men stand to one another but by the functional divisions required by the job to be done." (p. 296).

The managerial character of work is already implied in the notion of service, although it is often overlooked. Service can only be service if it is deliberate; that which is done accidentally or under constraint can hardly be regarded as service. Many complaints about work stem from a neglect of its managerial character. When a worker — whether he be an employee of General Motors or a child in the home — is given a task, he must be told why the task needs doing (i.e. how it fits into the larger purposes of the industry or home), and he must be given a certain amount of leeway about how the task is to be performed (i.e. managed). Too often we treat workers like adaptable machines. When a worker is used as a machine — whether by General Motors or by his father— he will resent his work and may even develop an aversion to work. Every worker must, to a certain degree, direct and manage his own work, even if this involves losing some time through trial and error learning.

(To be continued)

PASTORIAL COUNSELLING

Becoming a whole person

REV. RALPH HEYNEN
PINE REST CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

The subject on which I would like to write today is "Becoming a Whole Person." A lady was telling me the other day that her husband was a regular Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I know she was saying this in a bit of a fit of anger, but at the same time she was describing her husband as being extremely inconsistent. When he was out among other people he was a hale fellow well met; he was the life of the party; he was one who could talk with other people and was very pleasant, but when he was home he was ugly; he was the kind of person who was constantly picking a fight; he was always sullen and angry. Now here is the kind of person where you find extreme inconsistencies, a type of dual personality. Fortunately, there aren't too many like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde because at one time this man was a benefactor of society and another time he was a murderous fiend, with intent of trying to harm other people. We do generally develop a blindness to the contradictions that there are in our own character, but at the same time these contradictions tend to build up great conflicts within ourselves.

One of the greatest needs we all have is to develop a sense of inner unity, to find some kind of principles by which we can unite ourselves as one person so that we can be consistent. It's little wonder I think that young people sometimes describe us older people as being fogy. People can be Sunday School teachers, or members of the board of trustees of the church, but when they are out in the arena of life they are ready to drive a hard bargain or when they're at home they tend to be angry tyrants; it's no wonder that they then complain about the fact that church people are hypocrites and are not really sincere but basically such people cannot really be happy people because of the fact that there is a duality within their personality which makes life miserable for them. There are devisive forces that tear men apart. There are things that are happening in the world that cause this kind of conflict.

I'd like to mention some illustrations of the kind of dualism, the kind of devisiveness that you find in the lives of some people and that make others miserable, but they themselves are basically more miserable because they've got to live with themselves twenty - four hours of the day. I'm thinking of a man who's two-timing on his wife who has not been faithful to her. He treats her like a queen when he is at home but he also has a girl-friend along the side. Now this kind of person must be torn asunder with a lot of strife. He can't fully respect his wife, nor can he really respect the other woman, but most of all he can't really respect himself when he is doing something like this, and the guilt feelings that he has and the struggles that he has within is soul, the conflict that this brings about within him, makes him a miserable person. There are those parents, for example, who manifest a favouritism for one or more of their children, like Rebecca who favoured Jacob and Isaac who favoured Esau; so also in a lot of families there is this sort of thing. There are mama's children and there are daddy's children, and girls will say sometimes, "I was my daddy's daughter, and he would do anything for me, but I always fought with my mother." Now, such parents must also have a strange conflict within their souls, if they favour one child over another. I know it's awfully hard to treat every child exactly alike because children are bound to be different. Some have more likeable qualities than others, but I wonder sometimes whether those who are more likeable haven't also received more love and understanding on the part of the parents, and as a result you find this situation. Too many families are being torn assunder by just that kind of attitude, and more basically it tears the children apart, because it brings an inner conflict which makes life miserable for them.

There are others who live with a lack of moral scruples. I'm not thinking just of unfaithfulness in marriage, but the fact that a lot of people have a tendency to have two sets of standards by which they live. They want other people to live by one set of standards and they have a different set of standards for themselves. They expect strict honesty and diligent work from those people who work for them, but they're possibly not that honest themself when it comes to paying their workers or when dealing with other people. A man who worked for a construction firm and who was evidently quite a skilled carpenter said, "I feel sick when I see some of the things that go on when the boss insists that we shouldn't be so fussy; we shouldn't be so particular because otherwise we're not going to make as much money. The result of it is that homes are being built that are not too well constructed and within a few short years there are going to be all kinds of gaping holes and seams that don't stand up under the stress of time." We need to set moral scruples which are consistent.

The same spirit that we have when we're in the church should also be manifested in our daily living, in our families, in our work, in our business, but then above and beyond all this I think there are the conflicts that people have within themselves. I know of a good many people who are living with guilt feelings. They have an aching conscience because they have not been doing the things they ought to do or they have neglected the things that they ought to do. Not all guilt feelings are healthy. In fact, there are some that are pretty sick, but when we live constantly with the feeling that we have done something wrong, something bad, something that we haven't been able to overcome, we're not going to be a whole person. I think also you'll find this same sort of thing in the way that people approach life in general. We know what we ought to do; we know what we are supposed to be doing, and yet so often we find ourselves drifting off, not necessarily because we're dishonest but because we're not quite able to face life as it is. There are people who live that way, and they have various means by which they try to escape from life; the adolescent with his drugs and the flower children who try to reject the establishment, who live differently, not happier, but differently; or the people who wallow in self-pity or those who need alcohol to escape from the realities of life. They're letting the child that's in them rule and take over, particularly the spoiled child.

In a world like the one in which we are living, particularly in the States during the days of a presidential campaign; you hear all kinds of things that are thrown out. There are those who are constantly criticizing and rejecting what the government has done. And then in turn again there is a good deal of mud slinging and a good deal of dishonesty in telling half truths about the other person. And when you listen to some of these men you would get the impression that this nation is about ready to be torn apart and that it had its best days and that it won't be long before it will fall apart at the seams. There are a lot of evils within the land, but if our country could be attacked next week or next month, all of these people, no matter what they say about the government or what they say about the other man, they would join hands in hand and they would fight together in order to preserve the land. And its that kind of thing that brings inner unity also within the soul of a man, when he finds some goal in life that keeps him going, something worthwhile that makes life worth fighting for, and in that spirit I think we find unity. And more than all this you find this not in a set of concepts and rules and regulations; you don't find it necessarily in a creed; but you find it in a Person, in Christ Himself. He has the power to make men whole again, in the individual life, in the home and family, in the community, in the world of work. He makes us whole, when body, mind, emotions and souls feel the touch of His love and we become whole in Christ.

OUR THOUGHT FOR TODAY: Mental health must not be considered to be the absence of distressing symptoms; but it is a state of mental well-being in which the person is adjusted to himself, to the world about him, to other people, to the social environment, to his work, and to his God. This means that mental health is something positive and that's what we need.

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KNOW YOUR
Back to God Hour

The film flickered on the screen as the projector droned on. The audience numbered only four. The movie was entitled, appropriately, LATIN CROSSCURRENTS. Its subject was the Christian Reformed Church's ministry to South America—and its unlimited future potential.

As the film showed scenes of South America, one man in the audience of four commented authoritatively. And well he should. His name is Rev. Juan Boonstra. His birthplace: Argentina, South America.

Rev. Boonstra, who is the Associate Radio Minister for the Spanish broadcast of The Back to God Hour, became acquainted with the Christian Reformed Church through the veteran missionary, Rev. Jerry Pott. Rev. Boonstra came to the United States on a scholarship and completed his studies at Calvin College. He went to Calvin Seminary and graduated in 1954. After serving the Reformed Ghurch of Argentina for seven years, Rev. Boonstra returned to the United States to engage in the Cuban refugee mission work of the Christian Reformed Church. On January 1, 1966, Rev. Boonstra was installed as a radio missionary.

The foreign broadcast ministry took a giant step forward when Rev. Boonstra assumed his duties in directing the Spanish language program. The series of pilot programs he had produced earlier had proved to be of great value to the church in its work of missions. And more results soon followed.

LA HORA DE LA REFORMA is being heard in the Latin American world of South and Central America, Mexico, and the islands of the Caribbean — a field of over 200,000,000 people ... the fastest growing population in the world.

Today this broadcast is heard on stations in nearly every nation of this vast area. In 1967, through the providence of God, it became possible for the first time, to broadcast Protestant programs on stations in Mexico. In cooperation with the local Christian Reformed missionaries, this Spanish language ministry has been placed on 40 stations in Mexico.

In Latin America the future way of the cross seems as muddy as a rain soaked country road. It won't be easy ... but the people will not be led like sheep ... they rightly demand more to life than building gold-lined cathedrals for every saint.

A myriad of philosophies are coming into Latin America from the outside through mass media. Each philosophy sounds majestic. But not every way of life can bring majestic fulfillment. We at The Back to God Hour are thankful God is allowing us to proclaim the cross current of living water over the objections of Communism and Romanism alike.

Mission To Reach 1,200,000 Through India Telephone Books

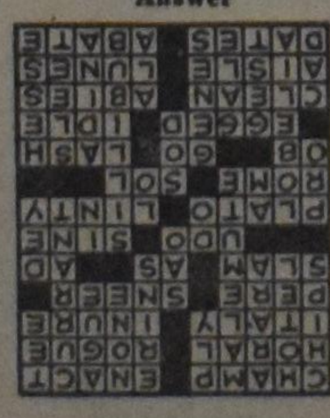
WHEATON, Ill. (EP) — A massive program designed to provide a copy of the Living New Testament for each of India's 1,200,000 telephone subscribers is underway, sponsored by the new daily radio broadcast "Partnership Perspective," aired by Partnership Mission, Inc. headquartered here.

President Rochunga Pudaite, second generation Christian from the hill section of northern India, stated that more than 200,000 paperback editions carrying a full color photograph of the Taj Mahal, and the title, "The Greatest Is Love," have already been received through the mail by top level Indian families.

The effort is a "good beginning," Pudaite said, expressing hope that the program to reach the elite of India will grow.

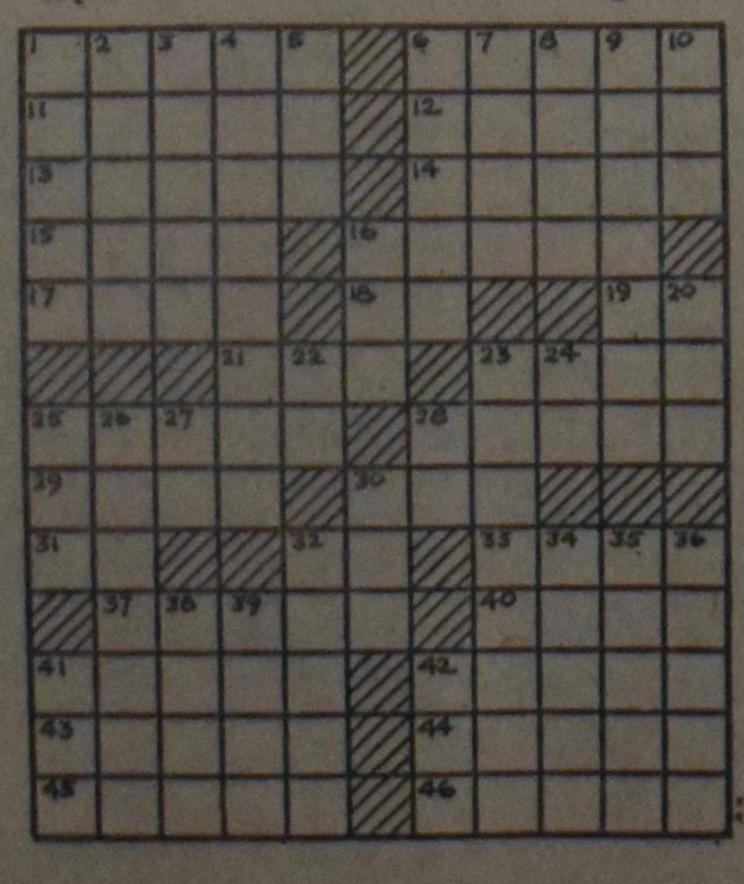
CROSSWORD

Answer



ACROSS
1. Chew with force
6. Pass, as a bill
11. Hourly
12. Rascal
13. NATO member
14. Harden
15. —— Marquette, explorer
16. Scoff
17. Bang
18. Like
19. Sale notice
21. Shrub (Jap.)
23. Mathematical term
25. Greek philosopher
28. Fluff-covered
29. Capital of 13 Across
30. Sun
31. Siberian gulf
32. Depart
33. Fasten with rope
37. Goaded
40. Not working
41. Unsoiled
42. "—— Irish Rose"
43. Passageway
44. Crescent-shaped figures
45. Social engagements
46. Subside

DOWN
1. Fragments
2. Inn
3. Palm cockatoo
4. Eskimo dog
5. Travel to and fro
6. Ireland's
7. Not any
8. Chills and fever
9. Kind of jelly
10. Pipe joint
16. ——, Paulo, Brazil
20. Tunis ruler
22. Music note
23. Something frothy, as rapid talk
24. At home
25. For
26. Herbaceous plant
27. Exist
28. American Indian (lit.)
30. Turf
32. Biological factors
34. Biblical name
35. Driving ice and rain
36. State of Bonn Republic
38. Adventure
39. Strong wind
41. Bounder
42. Wing



FIFTH ALBERTA CHRISTIAN REFORMED PASTORS' RETREAT

(September 5-7, 1972)

If last year's participants questioned whether our three day affair could properly be called a retreat, for this year's registrants little doubt remained that it was a party of a different colour. A revolution occurred. An all-male sanctuary, at which in previous years only the voices of men were heard in exhortation, whisper, shout, or song, became for three days a mixed conference at which pastors and their wives held hands, mingled in discussion, joined in song, or slipped out of sight into the mysteries of their double-bedded private rooms. Pioneer Lodge at Sundre was now the scene of the action and Mt. St. Francis Retreat in Cochrane receded into memory: a shift from the order and peacefulness (some dared call it gloom!) of a Roman Catholic retreat-center to a conversion-oriented Lodge complete with a variety of bunks and beds, a potluck assortment of furniture, a swimming-pool, riding-horses, and sheep. One of the organizers pointed out that although at Sundre the temptation to gluttony was not as strong as at Mt. St. Francis, other temptations were more attractive. Your reporter, camping wife-less amidst bottles, splints, and boxes of supplies in the dispensary, remained unconverted.

Pastors Boonstra and Knoppers introduced the subject, "The Biblical Concept of Office and the Role of Women in the Church." Boonstra stressed the importance of the calling of all believers and Knoppers the partnership of men and women in the church. The biblical instances in which women were asked to be silent in the church were not intended, said Knoppers, as part of a permanent order any more than veils or holy kisses.

After supper on the first day, having aired their views on partnership in the church, the pastors and their wives separated, the women to a song-session led by Winnie Vriend, the men to hear and evaluate Pereboom's sermon on the message of the Book of Esther. The sermon, which was judged to be strong on historical perspective and weak in present-day application, showed how Esther, though inclined to favour her role as a Persian beauty-queen, was forced to identify with her own people and to serve as mediatrix on their behalf. Devotions were conducted under the dynamic leadership of Henry Wildeboer who led the singing and his wife Joan who played the piano.

The following morning, stunned by the news of the gun-battle in which Israel's kidnapped Olympic athletes and their assassins were killed, we prayed for the Palestinians whose plight has led to acts of terrorism and for the mourning relatives and fellow-citizens of those who were carried home in coffins. Pastor De Moor led a joint-discussion on the subject of Divorce. In a penetrating introduction he laid down a number of far-reaching propositions. Examples (please note: this list is incomplete!):

1. Bible texts relating to divorce cannot be applied directly to our divorce problems . . . In the social structures to which the Bible has reference only the man can reject his partner and it is to this rejection that the texts apply.

2. The Bible has two lines of approach: (a) the demand for perfection and (b) the acknowledgement of sin-ruined reality.

3. There are no "grounds" for divorce. There are a host of reasons why marriages break down.

4. Divorce should be granted only after a number of professional people have independently examined the situation and testified to an irreparable breakdown.

5. The church should instil in governments a deep respect for the holiness of marriage . . . The church should proclaim to its members the love of God which can heal that which seems irreparable, obedience to the law of love, and the gospel of reconciliation.

6. Every church should deal with each case of divorce on its own merits.

7. Before allowing re-marriage the church should be sure that the members involved have seen their personal share in responsibility for the break-down of a previous marriage and have received adequate counselling.

A lively discussion followed on what constitutes an irreparable breakdown. Should not Christians always be able to make up?

In the afternoon, the proper distance between the men and the women having been restored, the men listened to a taped sermon delivered by Pastor Postman. The subject concerned the judgment of God which begins with his people (I Peter 4:17). After hearing Postman's impassioned exhortations his critics were eager to take up matters of exegesis with him personally. The women meanwhile discussed Tournier's book on Marriage.

The Battle of the Giants, the much-anticipated soft-ball game between North and South, did not take place. Snowfall, and possibly the presence of other attractions, dampened enthusiasm for this annual clash of clerical ambitions. Instead, we saw to our amazement how leading men of the cloth, dressed in the briefest garb imaginable, dived through inflated rubber tubes while their wives splashed mermaid-like in other parts of the pool. Later in the day a number of men melted out of sight and did not return until they had seen the end (4-4) of the Russia-Canada hockey game.

"Meaningful Worship — the second service" was the topic for Wednesday evening. After a slow start the talk moved to the implications for worship of mature membership in the church of Jesus Christ. Prof. Timmerman's fears that the worm (in the pew) will devour the lark (in the pulpit) were not shared by anyone, but neither was there a single person in favor of silencing the lark. In fact, no one cared to use the discriminating words. Nearly all favoured services in which the Word remains central and in which there's room for the exercise of gifts of the Spirit given to all believers.

In the final session of the Conference (Retreat? Workshop? Co-educational Seminar?) John Vriend and Henry Wildeboer shared their impressions of the life of the denomination as it came to expression at the 1972 Synod. The near-unanimous acceptance of Report 44 and the considerable influence of Canadian delegates at this Synod lifted our spirits. A vote on whether to meet again as couples or as singles showed a two-thirds majority in favour of the former, provided the date can be moved up a week. Some soulful singing brought to a close another fine — whatever you wish to call it.

John Vriend

We Were There Too!

Brother John has written an able and for the most part accurate, though very male oriented, report of our conference retreat. Let me rephrase a few lines. "An all female sanctuary where for the past three years only women voices were heard in discussion, laughter, prayer, and song in three parts, became a mixed conference . . ." It was too bad that for family and health reasons eight of the conferees (men) came solo and it was understandable that some of these longed again for the monastic surroundings of Cochrane where couples cannot be accommodated. I can also understand that some are left cold by a swimming pool, riding horses, tabletennis, a good piano, and rooms for two, but surely these pastors and shepherds should have gleaned some inspiration from the sheep!

As we women realize that we can learn much from our men we sat in on, and to some extent participated in, the discussions about "The Biblical Concept of Office and the Role of Women in the Church" and "Divorce" and "Meaningful Worship." One word to some of our men: Please do not refrain from 'digging deep' because you are afraid to offend our limited intellect. Try us! !

We left the men to battle out their problems in sermon-making and had two sessions for women only. The first, very relaxing and uplifting, found us singing. We sang and sang new songs and old songs. We sang hymns that will hopefully be added to our psalter in the near future. This was by no means the only time we sang. In fact we sang with and without the men morning, noon and night. Jan Wildeboer's zestful accompaniment made it an exhilarating experience every time.

In our second women — only session Marie Jongsma gave a book report on *Understanding each Other* by Paul Tournier. We found it to be a very helpful book, perhaps an eyeopener for many, not only in husband and wife relationships but also in our dealing with others. Dr. Tournier shows how we do not really listen to each other and how this leads to much unhappiness. He goes on to show how we can improve on that situation. Real understanding of each other can only be attained by a personal submission to Jesus Christ.

Wednesday afternoon we spent sometime immortalizing our group on celluloid. Our camera artist, Ron Fisher, was granted all the time he wanted especially as he seemed to have many weighty matters on his mind.

In our evaluation session it became evident that we all, men and women, gave up something and gained something by this change in the nature of our retreat. Those who felt we had lost were the more vocal, but those who felt we had gained turned out to be the more numerous.

Winnie Vriend

Constipated?
Chew Feen-A-Mint. It's a chewing gum laxative that's gently effective. And pleasant tasting. It's one laxative everyone can take. So don't suffer from irregularity. Reach for a gentle laxative.
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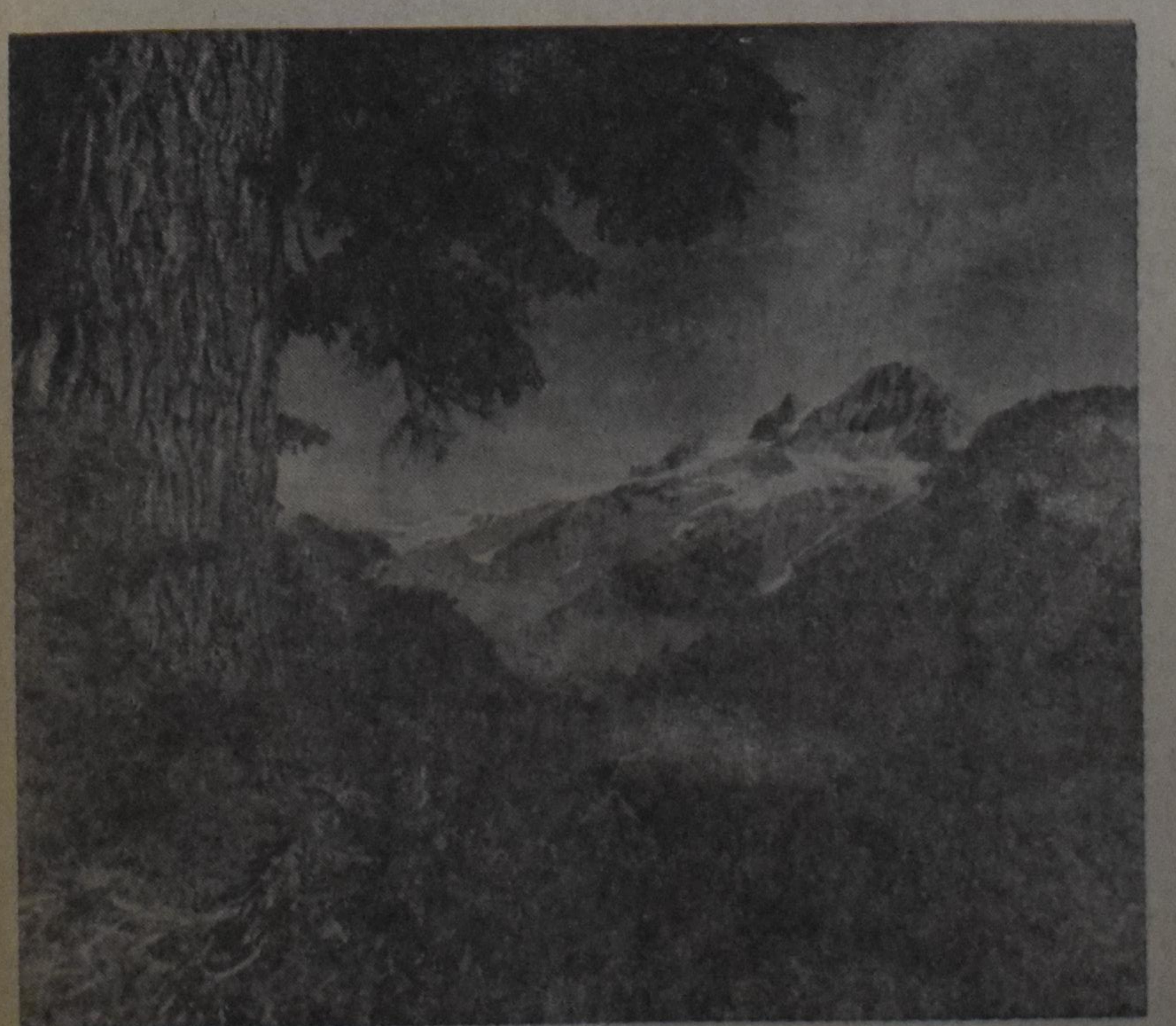

MOUNT GARIBALDI IN SOUTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA — The mountains of British Columbia have a grandeur that belongs to the world. National parks, hot springs, forests and glaciers, blue lakes and brisk mountain air — all these ingredients make life on the west coast a major Canadian attraction. Of the 366,255 square miles comprising the total area of the province, almost 60 per cent is forest land, an area more than four times that of England, as large as the combined area of Spain and Portugal, and more than half as big again as Japan. (British Columbia Government Photo)

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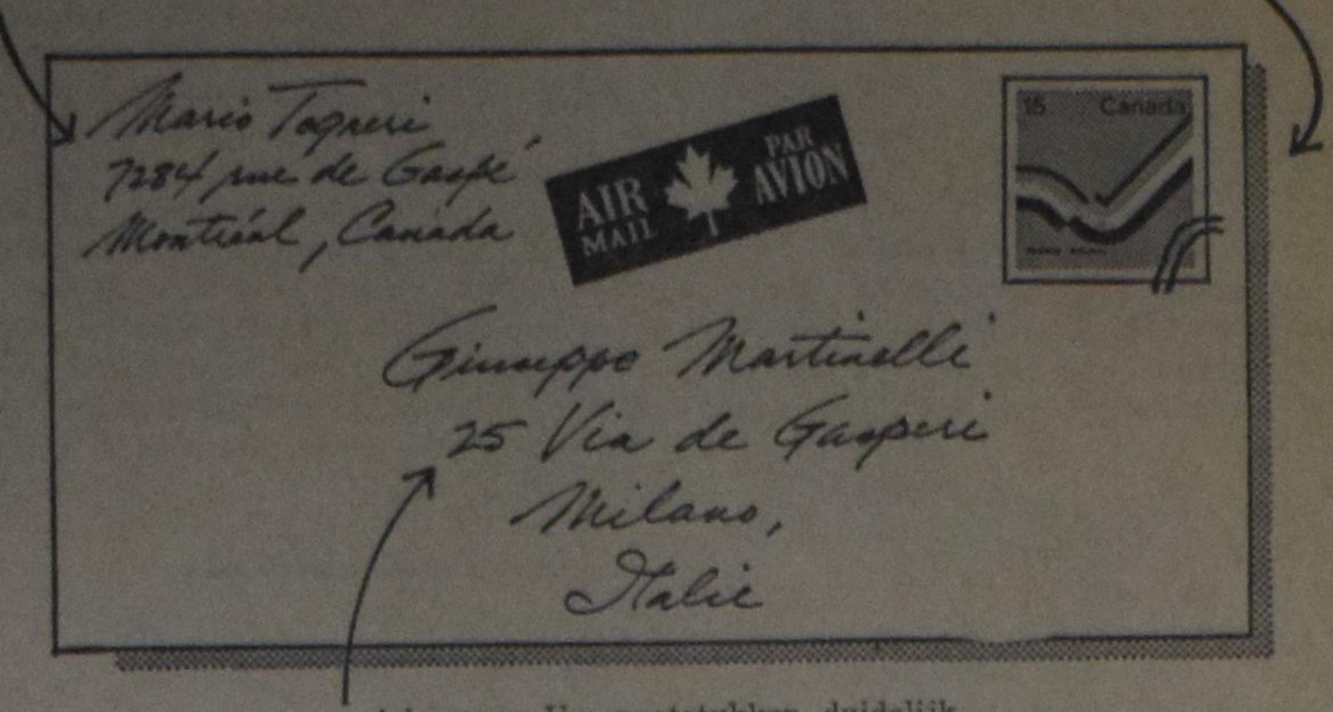

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M. BASILEA SCHLINK — "Hij heeft mij geroepen".

Uitgave van T. Wever, Franeker.

Gerecenseerd door
Rev. P. M. Jonker

Een merkwaardig boek voor deze tijd. Oorspronkelijk in het Duits geschreven vraag je je af: Wat moet de uitgever er in gezien hebben om het ook in het Nederlands te publiceren? Het is al treffend dat volgens de inleiding het de jeugd geweest is die op oorspronkelijke publikatie aandrong. En de Nederlandse uitgever moet toch wel verondersteld hebben, dat ook nederlandse jongeren en ouderen naar deze "paper back" zouden grijpen.

Waarom ik het merkwaardig vind? De schrijfster is een van de oprichters en "moeders" van de Protestantse gemeenschap van Mariazusters. In dit boekje geeft ze haar levensbeschrijving, geillustreerd met vele aanhalingen uit een dagboek dat ze blijkbaar gedurende vele jaren heeft bijgehouden. Het zijn niet zozeer de feitelijke gebeurtenissen die de inhoud van deze auto-biografie uitmaken, doch veeleer de diepbeleefde zielestrijd om vrede met God te vinden en om haar leven volkomen in dienst van de Heiland te stellen.

Naar haar aard is de schrijfster blijkbaar een levenslustig en begaafd meisje, begerig om zich ten volle in het grote wereldleven te werpen. In allerlei wendingen in haar leven ziet ze in groeiende mate de hand van de hemelse Vader die haar vormen gaat tot een instrument in Zijn dienst. In haar jonge jaren wordt haar trots en geldingsdrang beknot door vele teleurstellingen. Ze leert echter door veel gebed het alles te zien als het snoeien van de hemelse Landman, die haar voorbereidt voor de taak voor haar weggelegd. De gebeurtenissen worden gekleurd door de moeilijke jaren van het Hitler-regime en de verschrikkingen in Duitsland van de laatste wereldoorlog.

Het treft in dit boekje dat de schrijfster het probleem van de verhouding tussen wereldaanvaarding en wereldmijding op Bijbelse wijze oplost. Of beter, God doet dat voor haar en in haar. Wereldgelijkvormigheid en pietisme worden beide onderkend in hun grote gevaren. De realiteit der zonde en de urgentie van een werkelijk berouw worden sterk beleefd, terwijl de bevrijding door de genade van Jezus Christus tot een diepe, zelf-opofferende liefde leidt.

Publikatie van zo'n boek bevestigt me in het geloof, dat ook de jonge mens van vandaag hunkert naar waarachtig houvast en eerlijkheid. Als jonge mensen (en ouderen!) dit boekje lezen en apprecieren kan dat alleen maar bewijs zijn van een openheid voor het Bijbels evangelie en een verlangen om voor jezelf tot een volkomen vernieuwing te komen.

Aankondiging van een nieuwe genezende stof: Slinkt Aambeien

Exclusieve genezende stof heeft bewezen dat het ammbeien slinkt en beschadigd weefsel heeft.

Een vermaard onderzoekinstituut heeft een unieke genezende stof ontdekt met de eigenschap om aambeien pijnloos te doen slinken.

Het verlicht het jeuken en ongemak in minuten en versnelt het genezen van het beschadigde en ontstoken weefsel.

In geval op geval, terwijl het zachtjes de pijn verlicht, vond feitelijk vermindering (slinking) plaats.

Het meest belangrijke van alles — de resultaten waren zo grondig dat deze verbetering over een periode van vele maanden bleef gehandhaafd.

Dit werd bereikt met een nieuwe genezende stof (Bio-Dyne) dat snel beschadigde cellen helpt genezen en de groei van nieuw weefsel bevordert.

Thans wordt Bio-Dyne aangeboden in zalf en zetpil vorm genaamd Preparation H. Vraag er naar bij alle apotheken. Voldoening of U krijgt Uw geld terug.

(Adv.)

VAN ANDERE DRUKPERSEN

VREEMD MAAR JUIST

Onlangs was er een explosie op de zon. Wij hebben er niets van gemerkt. Maar het draadloos telefoon- en telegraafverkeer was ernstig gestoord over de gehele aarde. Dat kwam, doordat de explosie een schokgolf veroorzaakte van electrisch geladen gassen, die ook de aarde trof. Gelukkig waren wij afgedekt door een dampkring. In de ruimte, waar de astronauten buiten de aardse atmosfeer zouden opereren, is in zo'n geval OVERLEVING NIET MOGELIJK. Er is een oude term in de geijkte tale Kanaäns, dat wij allemaal "nietige stof- en aardbewoners" zijn. Dat wordt ons wel duidelijk, als we lezen, dat de kracht van de explosie wordt geschat op die van HONDERD MILJOEN WATERSTOFBOMMEN. Of ook wel, dat de vrij gekomen energie voldoende zou zijn om de gehele aarde een miljoen jaren van elektrische energie te voorzien.

Maar er is ook nog een andere gedachte, die boven komt. DE ZON VERSLIJT. Zij verslijt al sedert het begin van haar bestaan. Eenmaal is zij, als er eerder niets tussenbeide komt, helemaal versleten. Dat is ook een vreemde gedachte, maar zij is wel juist. Het "blij vooruitzicht, dat mij streelt", slaat op iets anders. Voor hen, die daarvan niets willen weten, is er déze zekerheid: zelfs met de zon is het eenmaal afgelopen.

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IN ZIJN ARM DE LAMMEREN

Dit verhaal, dat in zeker opzicht allegorisch is, verplaatst ons op een der Zeeuwse eilanden in de twintiger jaren. en vergunt ons een blik in het hart en leven van een kind. Het doet ons denken aan een bloemknop die zich langzaam en gestadig ontplooit om tot volle bloei te komen; doch het weent niet "om bloemen, in den knop gebroken, en voor den uchtend van haar bloei vergaan."

Door
CORNELIUS LAMBREGTSE

(58)

En naderhand spuwen ze de werkelijke klei weer uit, maar dan vanachter, voegt hij er met een gemeen lachje aan toe. Kijk maar, vervolgt hij. Met zijn spa graaft hij een diepe kuil waar een bijzonder groot hoopje "spuwsel" had gelegen, en even later wroet hij een paarsigrode lange geringde worm te voorschijn. Ja, Fransje is er van overtuigd dat dit een avontuurlijke tocht gaat worden. Hij vraagt zich benieuwd af wat ze over een steutje al niet te voorschijn zullen halen in het verdronken land zelf.

Dat mysterieuze oord is zodanig vergroeid met de schorre zelf dat de jongens een hele tijd moeten zoeken voor ze het eindelijk vinden. Ze zouden het waarschijnlijk nog niet eens geweten hebben dat ze er waren indien ze niet opeens een ziekelijkgele boomstronk hadden ontdekt die daar moederziel alleen in een wijde kleivlakte stond.

Daar was dus vroeger land geweest. Daar had een boom gestaan, met takken en bladeren, net als de bomen voor hun huis. En daar hadden vogels in gezeten, en misschien wel nestjes. Fransje kijkt er de troosteloze vlakte eens op aan. Heel in de verte ligt de dunne streep van de zeedlijk, met hier en daar donkere kruinengroepen van bomen er boven. En een beetje verder naar links steekt zowaar ook een hoge toren zijn stompe vinger in de lucht. Die had hij nog niet eens eerder gezien. Maar het is niet de toren van hun eigen dorp. Hij grijpt Kees bij zijn mouw en wijst er naar.

O, dat is Kapelle, zeker, antwoordt Kees tamelijk ongeinteresseerd. Kiek es oe kort amme bie Kapelle bin, voegt hij Jan toe. Omdat ze onder aan de zeekant van de dijk gelopen hebben, hadden ze dat nog niet eerder ontdekt.

Messchien ei ier wè iemand geld onder dien bôom begraeven, oppert Jan van de bakker. Meteen begint hij in de klei te spitten, en Kees volgt inhalig zijn voorbeeld. Maar dan ontdekken ze het tweede bewijs dat ze hier inderdaad bij het verdronken gebied zijn aangeland. Onder een dunne laag gewone schorreklei stoten hun spaden op een harde, taaie massa donkere grond die precies dezelfde samenstelling heeft als de omgeploegde natte klei in het najaar in de polder. Ze kunnen er hun spaden nauwelijks in krijgen. Hoe hard ze die ook met hun klompenvoeten aandrijven, het is tevergeefs. Weldra staat hun het zweet op het gelaat en al gauw hebben ze er genoeg van.

Een eind verder liggen er een massa rode potscherven, maar daar is de oorspronkelijke grond niet eens met schorreklei bedekt. Ook is er de bodem niet effen, maar brokkelig en hoekig, en zo mogelijk nog harder en taaier dan bij de boomstronk. Zo zal er van het schattengraven weinig komen. Ze kunnen nog niet eens een spa-diep door die vreemde oppervlakte dringen.

Fransje gaat op zijn hurken bij de scherven zitten. Eén ervan valt door zijn kleur en vorm op. Die is bruinachtig, terwijl de meeste rood zijn. Ook zit het ding half in de grond begraven. Alleen een klein gekarteld randje steekt er bovenuit. Maar het ding zit vast. Hij peutert er met zijn vinger omheen, maar nog komt het niet los. Dat is een uitdaging die Fransje niet zo maar naast zich neer kan leggen. Hij schraapt er met al zijn vingers omheen, maar het is alsof hij in een massa rubber graait. Had hij maar een oude lepel bij zich, of een spade, net als Kees en Jan. Toe, Kees, roept hij over zijn schouder, kom es ier mie je spae!

De jongers komen maar hem toe. Het zal toch al raar moeten gaan als ze dat ding in eek geval niet te voorschijn kunnen halen. Voorzichtig snijdt Kees met zijn oude zakmes de taaie grond in brokken en verwijdert die van het geheimzinnige voorwerp vandaan. Het is blijkbaar nog gaaf, want wat eerst een scherf leek, zet zich voort in een ronde welving, en nog is het niet helemaal bloot. Fransje wil telkens zijn handen in het gat steken om het werk te bespoedigen, maar Kees vraagt of hij afgesneden vingers wil hebben. Eindelijk glijdt zijn mes onder het voorwerp en heeft hij dus het einde ervan bereikt. Met zijn spa wipt hij dan het vaalbruine ding op, en daar ligt zowaar een ongeschonden kleine stenen kroes of pul aan hun voeten. Fransje duikt omlaag en pakt het op met beide handen. Dat ei ik evonnen! jubelt hij trots. Dat is voe mien!

Ja, dat moeten de andere jongens toegeven. Ze kijken met jaloerse blikken naar het eigenaardige pulletje. Het heeft een oor, en het glanst zelfs nog dof van een laagje verglaassel. Het gekartelde randje blijkt het voestuk te zijn, dat in een rond buikje overgaat en zich daarna weer vernauwt tot een volmaakt cirkelvormige opening. Het is blijkbaar een drinkkroes geweest. Fransje vraagt zich af of daar heel vroeger een jongentje zoals hij uit gedronken heeft. Het doet hem aan iets liefs en vertrouwds denken —aan zijn ledikantje en daarna ook aan zijn suikergoedbeestjes van zo lang geleden. Dat zal hij thuis op de schouwe zetten. Dan kan hij er iedere dag net zoveel naar kijken als hij maar wil.

Jan en Kees beginnen nu ijverig in de scherven te scharrelen. Blijkbaar beginnen ze hier "warm" te worden, want het zou toch al heel vreemd zijn als dat bekertje van Fransje het enigste gave voorwerp was tussen al die scherven. Maar hoe ze ook wroeten en graven en graaien, ze vinden niets dan gebroken aardewerk. Fransje heeft ondertussen de binnenkant van zijn schat zorgvuldig in een plasje zeewater gereinigd en draagt het kroesje behoedzaam met een kromme vinger door het oortje naast zich.

Een eind verder zien ze weer iets vreemds in de bodemgesteldheid, net of er iemand aan het ploegen geweest is. Dat ze dit niet eerder gezien hebben komt omdat de bodem hier zacht glooit en de rug van de glooiing dit gebied van een afstand aan het oog onttrok. Meteen hollen ze er heen. Fransje komt weldra een eind achteraan, omdat hij vanwege zijn potje niet zo hard durft te lopen. Maar dan merkt hij iets vreemds op in de houding der beide jongens. Die staan daar zo beteuterd en aarzelend te kijken dat het zijn nieuwsgierigheid opwekt. Hij versnelt zijn pas tot hij weldra naast hen staat en tracht te weten te komen waar ze zo vreemd naar staan te staren.

Dan ziet hij opeens tot zijn grote ontzetting dat tussen en achter die klaarblijkelijk omgewoelde grond een spookachtige verwarde massa blauwzwarte doodsbeenderen her - en derwaarts verstrooid liggen. Hij zou die naar alle kanten uitstekende stokachtige dingen niet als zodanig herkend hebben, indien er tevens niet een aantal onmiskenbare, grijnzende doodskoppen tussen verspreid lagen. En wat dit alles nog des te gruwelijker doet schijnen is die onaardse, blauwzwarte kleur waarin de vergeelde tanden haast schijnen te blikkeren. Fransje, die op een bult van de omgewoelde grond is geklommen, moet daar haastig van afstappen. Een gevoel van grote misselijkheid overwelmt hem. Als een angstig hondje dringt hij zich tegen Kees aan.

Jan van de bakker konkludeert dat dit vast het kerkhof moet geweest zijn, en het zeewater heeft zeker door de eeuwen die beenderen hun vreemde kleur gegeven. Maar dat verklaart niet die troosteloze wanorde die hier heerst, en die maar al te duidelijk van recente datum is.

De jongens kunnen niet weten dat hier slechts enkele weken geleden een aantal professoren en studenten van de universiteit van Leiden aan het graven geweest zijn, op zoek naar volledige geraamten van diverse grootte en van beide geslachten, en dat zij òf niet de moeite genomen hebben, óf door de opkomende vloed verhinderd werden, om de onbruikbare gedeelten weer fatsoenlijk onder de aarde te bergen.

(Wordt vervolgd)

Deze roman is in boekvorm verschenen bij Uitgeverij T. Wever in Franeker. Het verhaal verschijnt als feuilleton in ons blad met toestemming van de uitgever.

KINDERMISHANDELING

Het schijnt wel dat de verhalen van kindermishandeling met de dag toenemen. En die mishandeling gebeurt doorgaans niet door vreemden, maar door de eigen ouders. Het is weerzinwekkend als men leest dat een vader zijn kind zo heeft mishandeld, dat dit kind zijn leven lang achterlijk zal zijn of blind. Of dat een moeder haar kind zo laat vervuilen, dat er geen schoonmaken meer aan is. Rev. David Wilkerson vertelt daar iets van in zijn boek "The little people". Men behoeft er echter niet voor naar New York of andere wereldsteden te gaan. Men treft het vaak aan in zijn naaste omgeving.

Het is goed dat er getracht wordt hier iets aan te doen. Alleen meewarig het hoofd schudden verbetert aan de situatie niets. Het werk dat b.v. gedaan wordt door de Parent Child Concern Association valt toe te juichen.

Deze vereniging heeft onlangs een vergadering in Burlington, Ont., gehouden, waar als spreker optrad Dr. David Bakan. Dr. Bakan is professor in de psychologie aan de York Universiteit in Toronto, iemand die dus een deskundige op dit gebied kan worden genoemd. Het was interessant te lezen hoe Dr. Bakan de kindermishandeling terugvoert tot verschillende kinderverhalen, waarin heksen trachten kinderen te doden. Zij lijken erg onschuldig, maar de kinderen krijgen toch de impressie, dat er bepaalde duistere figuren zijn, die het op hun leven hebben gemunt. Die impressie ontwikkelt zich verder en komt vaak tot uiting op latere leeftijd. Wij laten dit nu verder voor wat het is. Psychologisch is er inderdaad wel verband te leggen tussen de ontwikkeling van een kind en de verhalen die het in de jonge jaren te horen krijgt.

Heel opvallend echter was, wat Dr. Bakan zei ten aanzien van de bijbel. Het zijn, volgens Dr. Bakan, niet alleen de sprookjes van vroeger, maar het zijn eveneens de verhalen in de bijbel, die het kind in latere jaren tot daadwerkelijke kindermishandeling kunnen voeren.

Volgens het bericht in de pers wees Dr. Bakan op de geschiedenis van Abraham en Izak, waarbij Abraham bijna zijn zoon levend geofferd had. Hij wees verder op het Pascha, waarbij de kinderen van de Israelieten werden gered, terwijl de kinderen van de Egyptenaren stierven.

Men kan nu zeggen, dat Dr. Bakan dan niet begrijpt waar het in de bijbel over gaat, en waarschijnlijk is men dan juist. De bereidwilligheid van Abraham om Izak te offeren — zijn enige zoon die hij op hoge ouderdom kreeg en die het geslacht van Abraham zou voortzetten — was een heilige test van de liefde van Abraham voor zijn God. En de Egyptische kinderen stierven opdat het volk van God zijn vrijheid tot ereandienst zou ontzangen.

Daar heeft Dr. Bakan misschien nooit bij stil gestaan. Maar hij wijst het aan als een mogelijke aanleiding tot kindermishandeling. En wij nemen aan dat hij dat op psychologische gronden meent te kunnen verdedigen. Maar daarom is het van uitermate grote betekenis hoe wij de bijbel lezen en hoe wij de kinderen de bijbelse geschiedenis vertellen. Dat is niet eenvoudig. Want wij kunnen de bijbelse historie maar niet lezen en vertellen, alsof het maar "een" verhaal is. Als wij God niet zien en als wij God niet láten zien in de gehele heilige historie, dan hebben wij misschien wel het verhaal gelezen of verteld, maar dan hebben wij de bijbel als openbaring van God gemist.

De bijbel moet gelezen en gebracht worden als boek van God, waarin God Zichzelf openbaart. Daar moeten wij ook aan denken bij onze voorbereiding voor "Evangelism Thrust". God spreekt daarin en God laat zien hoe Hij aan het werk is, "opdat wij geloven."

(Joh. 20:31.)

D.F.

VAN ANDERE DRUKPERSEN

Wat het zwaarst weegt

In Trouw troffen wij een reportage aan over de positie van het Christelijk onderwijs in Canada. Met een sprekend voorbeeld: een bevoegde docent, met name Hoytinga, diende uit overtuiging het Christelijk voortgezet onderwijs. Dat onderwijs ontvangt in de staat Ontario geen enkele subsidie. De betrokkene deed zijn werk dan ook voor een salaris, dat nauwelijks meer dan 60% bedroeg van het officiële salaris aan de staatsschool.

Voor onze lezers is dit geen nieuws. Wij hebben er herhaaldelijk op gewezen, dat de toestand in Canada en in de Verenigde Staten een treffende overeenkomst vertoont met de situatie in Nederland vòòr 1890. Vrijheid van onderwijs, maar geen enkele financiële steun uit de publieke kassen, met het gevolg, dat de ouders zware financiële offers brengen en de leerkrachten de grootste contributanten zijn van de school met de Bijbel. Tegen het einde van de vorige eeuw is het in ons land voorgekomen, dat een onderwijzer aan de Christelijke school, onder overigens gelijke omstandigheden, met dezelfde bevoegdheden en hetzelfde aantal dienstjaren, de helft verdiende van wat zijn collega uit de openbare school ontving.

Maar éven kwam in bedoelde reportage een gedachte naar voren, die al eerder in Nederland is geuit. Dat het niet gaat ten principale om de school met de Bijbel, maar om het bewaren van de eigen identiteit van een immigrantengemeenschap. Wat men in Nederland nu eenmaal had, wil men ginds voortzetten en dat zal op de duur niet meevallen...

Wij kennen vele mensen in Canada, wij hebben hun werk en hun strijd van nabij gezien. Wij hebben met vele ouders daar gesproken. Toen zij in de eerste jaren na de bevrijding, aangespoord door vertegenwoordigers van emigratie-centrales, besloten te emigreren, wisten zij, dat er grote mogelijkheden waren, vooral voor jonge, kinderrijke gezinnen, die van wanten wisten. Enigszins op de achtergrond stond ook wel de wetenschap, dat zij er voor hun kinderen géén school met de Bijbel zouden vinden, maar een school, die in de grond atheistisch is of bezig is dat geleidelijk meer te worden.

Zij hebben toen leren verstaan, zij hebben toen als het ware aan den lijve ondervonden, welk een zegen zij in Nederland achterlieten in de school met de Bijbel. Wij hebben daarginds moeders gesproken, die ronduit zeiden, dat hun kinderen, doordat zij nooit op een school met de Bijbel waren geweest, blijvend benadeeld waren en te kort waren gekomen.

Daarom hebben de mannen en vrouwen, de vaders en moeders, daar de zware beslissing genomen, zelf te zorgen voor een school met de Bijbel. Wij hebben zo'n school gezien met acht leslokalen die de ouders en de kerkelijke gemeenschap per jaar 60.000 dollar kostte en dat bedrag werd bijeeengebracht door nog geen 200 gezinnen. En diezelfde school kost nu al bijna 100.000 dollar per jaar. Alleen de staat Alberta geeft subsidie: 100 dollar per leering en per jaar.

Maar het gaat deze ouders heel fundamenteel *om de school met de Bijbel*. Niet om het bewaren van de eigen identiteit.

Onlangs hebben wij in het Friesch Dagblad driemaal aandacht geschonken aan de NACPA, die nieuwe Christelijke politieke actie in de Verenigde Staten. Juist in deze dagen houdt deze associatie haar congres in Grand Haven.

Als eerste punt staat op de agenda van het congres; de Christelijke school. En uit rapporten bleek, dat ook in het Zuiden van de States, waar van Nederlandse immigratie nauwelijks een spoor te vinden is, in de protestantse kerken een groeiend besef aanwezig was, dat "de atheistische school een nationaal gevaar betekent". Zo werd het door een predikant uit een typisch Amerikaanse kerk geformuleerd. En hij voegde er aan toe; ik bedoel atheïstisch in deze zin, dat de school in de praktijk uitgaat van de stelregel: òf God bestaat, kunnen wij in het midden laten, want in elk geval is Hij op deze school niet op de agenda.

Er was een tijd, dat vele Christenen in Amerika dachten, dat de zondagsschool een behoorlijke compensatie leverde in een land, waar de gewone school van de staat een school was, waar op hoog bevel de Bijbel was geweerd en het gebed was verboden. (Beide is in de Verenigde Staten het geval, door beslissingen van het Hooggerechtshof!) Maar de zondagsschool verliest snel aan betekenis. Vooral door een zeer voor de hand liggende oorzaak: in het weekend is het gezin ergens elders. . .

In Amerika is de schoolstrijd nu in dezelfde fase, die onze grootouders in Nederland hebben meegemaakt.

(Fries Dagblad)

WANNEER ZAL 'T ZIJN?

Als U binnenkort gaat trouwen of wanneer U spoedig een jubileum mag vieren, in beide gevallen zal het voor Uw vele vrienden en bekenden een aangename verrassing zijn, een annonce ervan in hun eigen krant, Calvinist-Contact te lezen.

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Bezoek aan Canada

door Gé Verhoog

④

Wat de kerken betreft: dit is een onderwerp apart en past niet in dit artikel. Ik meen, dat de kerken in Nederland te krampachtig de oude tijden vasthouden en de moderne mens niet geven wat hij vraagt. Men mist de boot: men kan op twintigste-eeuw-vragen geen zestiende-eeuw-antwoorden geven.

De Bijbel is het vaste fundament, maar de ontwikkeling van de tijden maakt mensen-uitspraken wankelend en dit wil men niet zien. Dit is wonderlijk: de Bijbel is actueel tot op heden en hét handboek voor de Christen, maar het is of men mensenuitspraken méér vasthoudt en dit leidt tot een verstarring. Ik heb zelf ondervonden, dat men mij het zwijgen oplegde omdat de vrouw moet zwijgen in de gemeente — dit betrof een gemeentevergadering. Toen ik eens in een gezelschap van mannen was (na de oorlog kerkten we in een noodgebouw omdat onze kerkgecouwen verwoest waren; het gezelschap bestond uit de kerkeraad, de koster en ik als enig vrouwelijk aanwezige omdat ik het orgel mocht bespelen) nam de domine na afloop van de dienst (de "dienstknecht van elders") van de mannen afscheid met een handdruk, maar sloeg mij, die in het midden van de mannen stond, over. Voorts werden nooit vrouwen in stemmingscommissies benoemd en dit in deze eeuw! Er moet meer inspraak komen en meer erkenning en hierin blijft Nederland achter en — raakt de kerk in verval. Natuurlijk generaliseer ik enigzins, maar het raakt wel de kern.

Tenslotte het klimaat: ik verliet Toronto na drie weken zonneschijn en heerlijke temperaturen, waarbij één dag regen. Op het tijdstip van vertrek was het 30 graden Celsius in Toronto — er ging een rilling door ons heen toen de captain van het vliegtuig bij nadering Amsterdam aankondigde dat het 8 graden was op Schiphol. 22 graden verschil. Bij aankomst op Schiphol waren de 8 graden gestegen tot 12 graden . . . een helder blauwe Hollandse lucht en stralende zon maar koud!

Wat een verschillen.

Ik heb getracht enkele verschillen naar voren te brengen. "O, Canada!" Canada, dat het grootste aandeel heeft gehad in onze Bevrijding en het was een belevenis in Toronto een oudere heer te spreken die deel heeft genomen aan de Bevrijdingstroepen.

"Holland, mijn Holland, ik vind je zo mooi". De wilde jacht van sneeuwwitte wolken langs de strakke blauwe lucht; de pracht van wisselende seizoenen — he soms krampafhtige leven, de discussies, de comité's, de Tweede Kamer. . .

Wat is het verschil? Ruimte van geest? Invloed van de omgeving? Zijn de mensen anders? Kent deze kleine planeet aarde dan zoveel diep ingrijpende verschillen?

Ja — er bestaan diep ingrijpende verschillen. Maar er zijn veel overeenkomsten: God is overal en God bouwt nog paradijselijk aan Zijn natuur. De mensen zijn verschillend en leven hun eigen leven en beleven hun eigen levensvisie, maar in één ding zijn wij allen één, of wij de "Kerkbode" lezen of "Calvinist-Contact": wij kennen één doel in ons — God Drieënig.

Gé Verhoog.
Beverwijk. Plesman weg
Holland.

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GEMIDDELDE INTEREST TOT VEVALDAG

VAN DOMINEES EN GEMEENTEN

door JOHN DE HAAS

(26)

Het Jaar der Vereniging 1892

Op de zeventiende Juni van dit jaar was het tachtig jaar geleden, dat de vereniging plaats vond van de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk en de Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerken, van de Afgescheidenen en de Dolerenden. Toen was het ideaal van velen althans gedeeltelijk bereikt: vereniging van Gereformeerden uit twee verschillende Kerkengroepen tot één Kerkverband: de Gereformeerde Kerken.

Nu is het altijd al zo geweest, dat bij vereniging van twee of meer kerkengroepen er steeds mensen zijn, die niet meedoen. Dat zien we in Schotland, in Amerika, en ook in Nederland.

Toen in 1869 de Afgescheidenen zich verenigden met de Kruisgemeenten, waren er drie gemeenten uit de laatsten: twee, die vacant waren (Lisse en Tricht) en Enkhuizen met haar predikant Ds. J. W. van den Broek, die "op zichzelf bleven staan". Zij bleven zich Gereformeerde Gemeenten onder het Kruis noemen, later kwamen er meer bij, tot zij zich in 1907 verenigden met de Ledeboeriaanse Gemeenten, onder de naam van: Gereformeerde Gemeenten.

Maar ook toen was er weer een deel, dat zich afzijdig hield. Ds. Lourens Boone, te St. Philipsland, wilde niet meedoen, en vormde met nog een aantal de "Oud-Gereformeerde Gemeeenten". Ze bestaan tot vandaag toe afzonderlijk.

Ook in 1892 waren er—niet in de Dolerende Kerken, die waren allen vóór vereniging—, doch in de Chr. Geref. Kerk, die niet met de vereniging meegingen.

Nu is de vereniging niet overhaast geschied, we hebben dat in vorige artikelen reeds gememoreerd. Zeer kort nadat de Doleantie was gekomen, gingen er reeds stemmen daartoe op. Velen in de Chr. Geref. Kerk hadden deze laatste beweging met vreugde begroet. In dezelfde week, dat de schorsing over de tachtig kerkeraadsleden te Amsterdam was uitgesproken, begaf een deputatie van de Chr. Geref. kerkeraad in die stad, bestaande uit de predikanten Neyens, Gispen en Brouwer, zich naar de woning van Dr. A. Kuyper, en bood deze de kerkgebouwen der Chr. Ger.. Kerk aan, om er het Woord te bedienen. Wat hún betreft, kon de vereniging dus wel aanstonds plaats vinden! Kuyper wees dit echter onmiddellijk van de hand. Hij had daarvoor natuurlijk wel goede redenen, doch het typeert toch wel het gevoelen, dat velen in de Chr. Geref. Kerk hadden betreffende de Doleantie. Op vele kerkeraads — en classisvergaderingen is over toenadering en eventuele vereniging gesproken, hoe dat nu allemaal moest, enzovoort. Vele malen traden predikanten over en weer in de Dienst des Woords op, en als men de kerkelijke bladen uit die dagen leest, komt men telkens berichten tegen, waarin beroepingen worden vermeld van Chr. Geref. predikanten naar Dolerende Kerken. En verscheidenen hebben zulk een beroep ook aangenomen, en zonder veel moeite zijn ze er bevestigd geworden.

Doch er waren er ook meerderen, die tegen vereniging hun bezwaren hadden. Zij zagen met name gevaren in de leer, die aan de Vrije Universiteit door Dr. A. Kuyper werd gedoceerd, en door diens leerlingen in de kerken werd ingedragen, speciaal in zijn, om het nu maar kort te zeggen "leer van de ondersteIde wedergeboorte".

Nu had de grote meerderheid van de Chr. Geref kerkmensen bezwaren tegen deze leer. Er waren zeer geharnaste strijders, die in woord en geschrift tegen deze opvattingen te velde trokken, doch bijna allen hebben tenslotte, neen niet hun opvattingen prijsgegeven, doch ze hebben gezegd: "Met behoud van onze bezwaren tegen deze leer, willen wij ons verenigen met de Dolerenden. Zij en wij buigen ons voor het Woord Gods en aanvaarden de Drie Formulieren van Enigheid als onze gemeenschappelijke belijdenis. En waar het hier betreft opvattingen van bepaalde personen, en niet de leer van een Kerk, mogen wij om deze reden niet afzonderlijk blijven leven".

Doch een kleine minderheid heeft echter gemeend niet te mogen medegaan. Zij waren bang, dat op de duur die leer steeds meer kerkleer zou worden en als we de latere geschiedenis van de Gereformeerde Kerken nagaan, moeten we dan niet tot de conclusie komen, dat die vrees niet geheel ongegrond is gebleken, om het nu maar heel zachtjes te zeggen?

Verscheidene honderden Christelijk Gereformeerden, waaronder vier predikanten hebben toen de Chr. Geref. Kerk voortgezet, zoals zij dat noemden. Deze laatsten waren: Ds. H. A. Jonkman, te Noordeloos, Ds. P. J. Wessels te Zierikzee, Ds. J. Wisse te s'Gravenhage en Ds. F. P. L. C. van Lingen, te Zetten. Speciaal de laatste mogen wij wel noemen de leider van de voortgezette Chr. Geref. Kerk. Hij heeft een eigenaardige levensloop gehad. Als eenling in de Chr. Geref. Kerk na 1892 was hij n.l. afkomstig uit de Doleantie!

Geboren in 1832, had hij voor predikant gestudeerd te Leiden, en was als modern predikant in 1855 te Hensbroek bevestigd. Doch door het lezen van een tractaatje bekeerd, verkondigde hij vanaf die tijd de Christus der Schriften. (Deze laatste zin klinkt, of hij afkomstig is uit een Zondagsschoolverhaaltje, maar het is toch waar gebeurd!) Hij kreeg in die moderne omgeving de bijnaam "de fijne dominee". Later werd hij predikant te Broek op Langendijk, en in 1862 te Zetten.

Hij nam ijverig deel aan de strijd voor kerkherstel, was jarenlang lid van het hoofdbestuur van de Confessionele Vereniging, en was van oordeel, dat de beste weg tot reformatie in de Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk was het opleiden van godvrezende jongelingen tot het predikambt. Zo begon hij zelf hiermede, door twee jongelieden onderwijs te geven. Gaandeweg breidde zich dat getal uit, waardoor tenslotte de oprichting van het Christelijk Gymnasium te Zetten mogelijk werd, waarvoor op 16 Sept. 1867 het reglement kon worden vastgesteld. Met ingang van 1 Jan. 1881 verkreeg Van Lingen eervol ontslag als predikant, om zich geheel aan het Gymnasium te kunnen wijden.

Toen de Doleantie uitbrak, ging hij terstond met deze beweging mee. Hij was het, die op die gedenkwaardige zevende Februari 1886 candidaat Houtzagers te Kootwijk in het ambt bevestigde. En ook de Dolerende Kerk te Zetten heeft hij enige jaren als predikant gediend. Doch reeds spoedig had hij verschillende bezwaren tegen de gang van zaken in de Kerken. Zo keurde hij het af, dat de predikanten hun toga bleven dragen, en ook, dat de kerkeraden de gewoonte bleven volgen, zoals die in de Ned. Hervormde Kerk werd gevolgd, om de zitplaatsen in het kerkgebouw, soms met opbod, te verhuren. Vermoedelijk zal iedere lezer dit bezwaar wel met Ds. van Lingen delen!

Dan was er het ruimschoots gebruik maken van artikel acht, om op grond daarvan broeders tot het predikambt toe te laten. Gedrongen door de predikantennood is men daar wel wat royaal mee geweest. Als men het jaarboekje der dolerende Kerken van de jaren 1888 en 1889 opent, dan ziet men een lijst van dertig, veertig namen van mensen, die toegelaten waren een stichtelijk woord in de gemeenten te spreken. Verscheidenen van dezen zijn in de loop der jaren predikant geworden, naar artikel acht. Ds. van Lingen heeft er echter op gewezen, dat in de tijd van Vader Brakel er slechts twee mannen in een periode van vijftig jaar op grond van dit artikel predikant zijn geworden, en hoe komt het nu, zo vraagt tij, dat er in deze tijd plotseling zovelen zijn, in wie singuliere gaven worden ontdekt?

Van Lingen maakte er ook ernstig bezwaar tegen, dat ieder, die lidmaat of ambtsdrager was geweest in het Nederl. Herv. Kerkgenootschap, ook als zodanig werd erkend in de Dolerende Kerken, zonder dat er een onderzoek werd ingesteld of de persoon in kwestie wel zuiver in de leer was. Hij voor zich betwistte de juistheid van deze gedragslijn en kwam er in 1888 tenslotte ook toe aan de Voorlopige Synode van zijn kerken bericht te zenden, dat hij zich niet meer als Dienaar des Woords beschouwde, daar hij zijn ordening, zoals hij die onder de organisatie van 1816 had ontvangen, niet meer kon erkennen. En in 1890 verklaarde hij het eens te zijn met het Statuut en Reglement der Chr. Geref. Dr. Kuyper schreef toen in "De Heraut" o.a. dat "de positie van Ds. van Lingen zuiverder zou zijn, zo hij nu ook eenvoudig tot de Chr. Geref. overging".

In Maart 1891 deed Van Lingen tenslotte deze stap. Hij gaf daarvan publiek getuigenis in het weekblad "De Bazuin" van 13 Maart 1891, zeggende, "dat hij zich reeds sedert meer dan twee jaren getrokken gevoelde tot de Chr. Geref. Kerk".

Op 3 Maart 1891 stelde de classis Arnhem der Chr. Geref. Kerk hem beroepbaar. Toen nu in 1892 de vereniging van de beide kerken tot stand kwam, ging hij niet mede, doch zocht aanstonds contact met gelijkgezinden.

Behalve de bezwaren, die men had tegen de leringen van Dr. Kuyper, was er de grief, dat in de zaak van de vereniging de plaatselijke gemeenten, de kerkeraden dus, niet genoegzaam waren gekend. En ook had men de naam Chr. Geref. Kerk willen behouden.

Zo kwamen deze broeders bijeen op 20 Juli 1892 te Utrecht, waar besloten werd om "uit te treden uit het verband waarin men op gewelddadige wijze is ingelijfd, om onder biddend opzien tot de Here, te blijven wat men tot 17 Juni 1892 was: wettige voortzetting der aloude Gereformeerde Kerk in deze landen, onder de naam van de Chr. Geref. Kerk in Nederland, wettig bij Koninklijk Besluit erkend".

In het begin was deze Kerk zeer klein, doch spoedig groeide het getal. Heel wat mensen hebben zo voor en na de Gereformeerde Kerken vaarwel gezegd en gingen over naar de Chr. Geref. Kerk. Ook verschillende predikanten kwamen over, sommigen met een deel van hun gemeente. In 1893 Ds. J. Schotel van Haarlem, in 1895 Ds. C. Wijdoogen van Oud-Beyerland, in 1896 Ds. H. M. van der Vegt van Heerde en Ds. D. J. van Brummen van Dordrecht, de laatste met bijna zijn gehele gemeente.

Langzaam is de Chr. Geref. Kerk gegroeid; zij telt thans 174 gemeenten, die bediend worden door 120 predikamten. Het zielental bedraagt ongeveer 70,000.

In 1892 was er één theologisch student, die zich bij de Chr. Geref. Kerk aansloot, de latere Prof. P. J. M. de Bruin. Hij werd verder opgeleid door de predikanten Wisse en Van Lingen. die ook verder belast werden met het opleidingswerk. Zij zijn dat jarenlang blijven doen. Was de opleidingsschool eerst te Rijswijk, Z.H. gevestigd, in 1918 werd zij verplaatst naar Apeldoorn, waar zij thans nog is. Heden ten dage zijn er vier hoogleraren, die aan de opleiding arbeiden, en het is dit jaar voor het eerst in de geschiedenis dezer Hogeschool, dat alle hoogleraren tevens doctor theologiae zijn. Twintig jaar geleden kon geen enkele van de toenmalige docenten deze titel voeren.

(Wordt vervolgd)

Voor een geslaagde vakantie met de hollandse gezelligheid.

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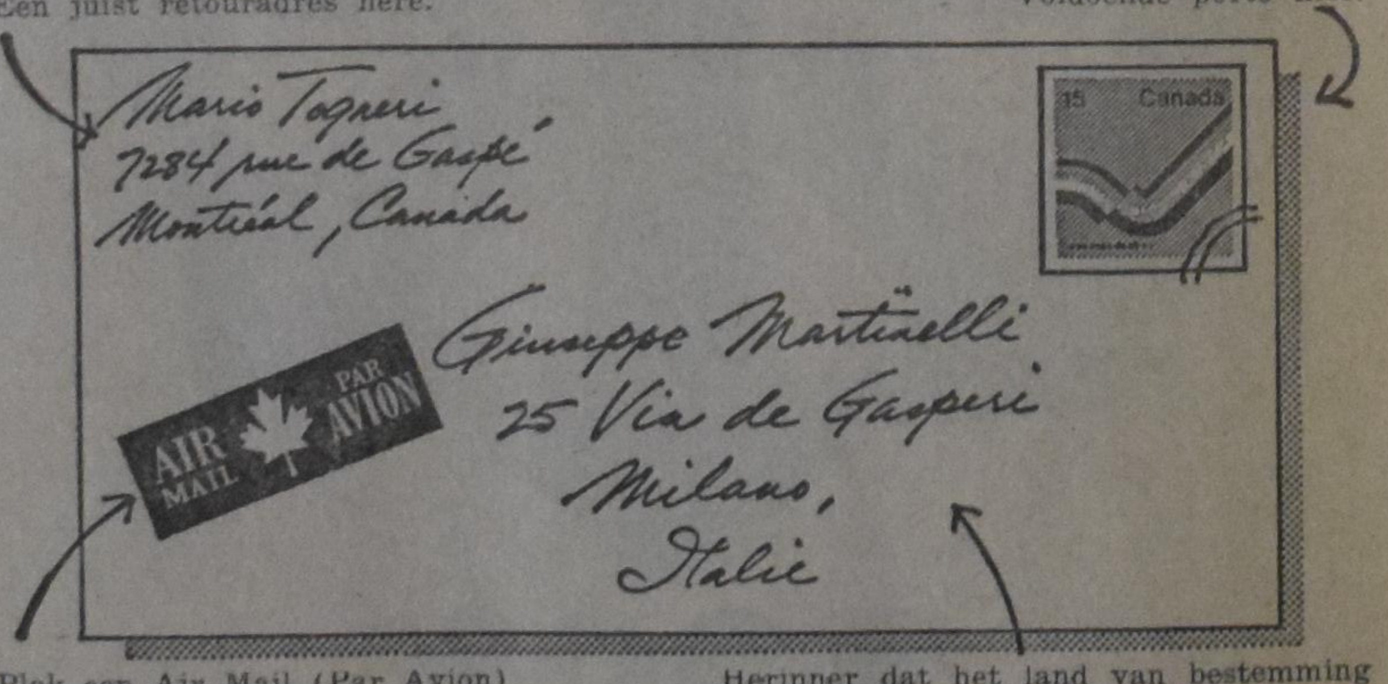

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GEEN OVERDREVEN BETEKENIS

Egypte heeft een nadrukkelijke gebaar gemaakt: de Russische adviseurs moeten het land uit. Egypte is echt boos op Rusland, omdat de Russen niet de aanvalswapens willen leveren, die Egypte nodig heeft voor een aanval op Israël. Rusland heeft het luchtverdedigingsystem van Egypte op de meest perfecte wijze ingericht en de Russische instructeurs bewezen onschatbare diensten. Dat was heel belangrijk, maar het betreft alleen de verdediging van Egypte. President Sadat wil de aanval. Een heel jaar lang heeft hij de wereld wijsgemaakt, dat de aanval op Israël nu voor de deur stond. Maar er gebeurde niets. Hij kòn niet aanvallen. Rusland stelde hem dáártoe niet in staat. De voogdij van de Russen kreeg een bijna compleet karakter en dat wekte in Egypte grote ontevredenheid. President Sadat moest wel iets doen en hij deed het op spectaculaire wijze.

Sommigen hechten aan dit alles groot gewicht en zien er een keerpunt in voor de ontwikkeling in het Nabije Oosten.

Wij niet.

Want Sadat verstaat nog beter dan de gewone oosterling de kunst, om komedie te spelen. Dat weten wij al lang.

Fr. Dagblad

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Voor inl. schrijf aan D. Brinkman, R.R. I, Bowmanville, Ont.

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21 December 1972 tot 1 Januari 1973
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Garlic is een natuurlijk antiseptisch geneesmiddel hetwelk de bloedsomloop vrijhoudt van onzuiverheden en voorkomt of vernietigt ontbindings-bacillen.

Adams Garlic Pearles bevat de essentiële Garlic olie, die voor vele jaren medisch is gebruikt. Gedurende eeuwen hebben miljoenen mensen Garlic gebruikt als een gezondheidsmiddel, vertrouwend in de genezende en versterkende werking. Help uzelf sterk en gezond te voelen. Koop een pakje Adams Garlic Pearles vandaag bij uw drogist. Het kan u beter doen voelen, gezonder en met minder verkoudheden. Zij zijn reuk- en smaakloos in capsule vorm.

Young Writers

Send manuscripts to
the Literary Editor,
Calvinist-Contact,
P.O. Box 1269,
Grand Rapids,
Mich. 49501, U.S.A.

Dear Literary Editor:

A few months ago I sat down and wrote a few thoughts in the form of prose. This week I happened to see an article in your paper asking for the work of young writers to be sent in for consideration. I decided to send you this and strongly hope that you will consider it.

Much of the following article is written figuratively. It touches some of the aspects in which man is a failure in running this world. It by no means implies that I serve as a corrective example of these failures, but simply that realizing imperfections in onesself he can recognize disputable characteristics in others.

Thanks
Peter Kingma,
Abbotsford, B.C.

Mechanical Man

Poor misfortunates we are . . . wallowing in the mud of our own success, gasping in the air of our own prosperity, choking in the filth of man's advancement. Is it success or is it doom? Is it advancement, or man believing he can get himself out of the pit into which he will hurdle this world if he believes he can save it himself?

Man's definition of happiness . . . material, shoves him face down into the most unhappy happiness ever conceived.

Human robots surviving in urban chicken coops, containing victims of mass production.

Man, flat on his back in the 'Ocean of Greed' . . . slowly sinking . . . leaving at last nothing but a quickly vanishing bubble in the earth's mind, and sinking below the ocean, the earth, in his decaying success.

Age of enlightment, gasping for a spark of light in the filthy skies of his own prosperity.

Through one side of our mouths we shout LOVE, PEACE!!, while through the other side we curse in the name of the God who bears these names.

We smirk at hearing of primitives who worship gods of wood and stone, while we serve our gods of mechanical metal.

Man, given the ability to reason knows the complication of life and nature, triumphantly theorizes on how life, which he wrecks his brain trying to explain, rose to its present state through a series of "adaptations to environment". The 'missing link' is man's own possession of true reason! Isn't it equally practical to say: a locomotive rose from the ground through a series of accidents and adaptions? Isn't a human body, life, much more complicated than a mechanical device?

There are sounds to be heard, we hear them; Things to be touched, we touch them; Aromas to be sensed, we smell them; Foods to be enjoyed, we taste them; and beauties to be beheld and we see them! To what levels of foolishness and ignorance can the intelligent species grovel?

We pollute the world with our mental and material filth in the name of success. What good will possession do us if they make us no happier than the poor?

Has love and emotion evolved from a single cell? Is hate and violence a freak accident, unfortunately placed by evolution? Are our souls a mass of cells which can be misplaced and scrambled to make some of us crawl in the dust of snakish hatred?

No! This is not pessimism; the cruel state of the world is fact.

Nature still harbours tranquil spots. Brooks still babble, birds still sing, and trees still sigh, but only with maximum appreciation and lack of greed can we preserve these sounds, before we sink into the pit of black success, and man glides into the robot world of silence.

There is love, but we must find it. . . Peace, but we must understand it . . . Meaning, but we must wish it. In a world which seems to want these things there is little evidence of the true search for them.

Grab the Prince of Peace before a flash of lightning converts our world into a revolving ball of fire, no more bouncing between heaven and hell, but buried forever in the company of the Black Angel.

What will all the world's progress bring it if this progress is dominated by greed, and pride and hope placed in the terminal hand of man?

•

KNOWLEDGE

But our God, all thoughts containing
Man, in search of his beginning,
thinks in terms of life-one-cell;
ever growing, never ending,
reaching heights no one can tell.
But our God, all thoughts containing,
only He knows the remaining;
in Him life is but a well,
and its depth no one can tell.
In this knowledge humbled low,
yet most certain it is so,
we are called to witness. Go!

— Jack DeVries

THE HOURGLASS

When thinking on the hourglass,
that turned, returned to what it was,
unlike to living matter;
for what is passed is come and gone,
and as in doing, does and done,
one cannot start what has begun,
nor former follow latter.
Yet while still watching running sand,
I see a law by God's command,
and Adam rising from the land,
a living soul from God's own hand,
the Former and the Latter.

— Jack DeVries

SON

I looked and saw the nature scene
as blessed by showers fair and green,
each plant its share receiving;
the Lord has given much and more
to those that worshipped Him before,
and us in Him believing.
I wonder why our gracious God
allows His people this one odd:
where He on earth with lowly trod,
some sprinkle flowers, not the sod.
Yet by His hand which gives it all,
and as by wind which rain makes fall,
while flowers can't contain it all,
we often get a double measure.

— Jack DeVries

NATURES

That early winter scene
I saw bare tree limbs
pointing skyward,
leave-stripped,
seemly forgotten
for a season,
yet every branch
heavenward directed.
And I,
a double nature
with many an effort
in manifold direction,
have yet so much to learn
that this will stand erected:
what heavenward is directed.
Oh Gardener of my soul
make my one nature whole,
in singleness perfected.

— Jack DeVries

•

HEADACHE IN KNEE

Richard (6) after a fall:
"Mom, I have such a headache in my knee."

S.H.

KICKING UP A STORM

Barbara (5), putting the story about Jonah to practice, furiously exclaimed:
"Richard, if you kick my pussycat, a big storm will come!"

S.H.

"THIS SUN IS MADE FOR WALKING"

Barbara, indiinantly, blurts to Richard wro refuses to go for a walk:
"Jesus does not let the sun shine for nothing."

THE PRESS

"I sometimes get depressed," a mother says to her daughter. "How about you?"
"O yes, sometimes. I've got to go upstairs and read it yet."
"Read it?"
"Yes, what else would you do with the press?"

S.R.

•

SAY IT!

Children say the cutest things. These brief incidents below retated by mothers, are examples of those precious moments in the life of a young child. Why not share your children's expressions with us? Don't worry too much about whether you say it right for publication. We have little helpers who gladly help to do that for you. Thanks.

BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK REVIEWS BY THE LITERARY EDITOR

THE STORY OF LIFE

By Ellis W. Whiting

Grand Rapids, Baker House
86 pp., Price: 95 cents

THE STORY OF LIFE was written by a former high school teacher, who likes children. The book answers the question, "Mother, where do babies come from?" in a natural tone and in the light of God's creation.

The need for a sensitive reverent, comprehensive, factually correct, and loving discussion of the function of sex in human life appears to be a perennial one. I believe this little book, recommended to me by my seven-year-old daughter, discusses questions she asks in terms which she can understand.

Over 650,000 copies of this little book are already in print, so the publisher states. If this is an indication of the popularity of the book and of its effectiveness, is certainly also must be filling an existing need.

Young children are introduced to life in an oftentimes one-sided way. They get their cues from TV, from reading material, and from so-called educational movies. *THE STORY OF LIFE* puts the responsibility of instructing children in what it means to have reverence for God and respect for parenthood, back in the home, where, in this reviewer's opinion, they belong.

If used as a means to that end this book will help the "I was just wondering" youngster to get to the great wonders of life from a better source and a better environment than the TV studio or the paved sidewalk.

Obviously the book does not answer all questions, but it does answer many of the questions a growing child asks about life, An appendix answers specific questions teenagers ask. Children will do their parents a favor by getting a copy of this book, and vise-versa.

C.B.

*LIMERICKS FOR LANTZMEN. By Larry Eisenberg and George Gordon, New York, The Citadel Press, 1965, $1.00**.

This little book has, counting the unnumbered pages correctly, about 62 pages, 29 of which are illustrations, the rest limericks, but not regular limericks: they are Jewish ones. So here is the recipe: take one of these delightful English verse forms, the limerick, and spice it with some ethnic humor, in this case with Jewish expressions, and what you have is a limerick that's *kosher* even for *geshmotts*. If that sounds like gibberish, try the English: *kosher*, according to the glossary in the back of the book, means "ritually fit for consumption" and *geshmotts* are "converts to Christianity."

The * asterisk behind the price means: look, I bought my copy for 19 cents (at Cole's in London, Ontario; maybe there is one in your hometown). It was worth a $1.00 bill in enjoyment to me. Also, this book gave an idea of what you can do if you're bilingual, and have a sense of humor.

•

SHRIVEN SELVES, by Wesley A. Kort,

Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1972; 149 pp., $4.50.

Dr. Kort is Associate Professor of Religion and Humanities at Duke University. In this book he illustrates from some of the works of DeVries, Malamud, Powers, Styron, and Updike, that a common denominator, a "confessional mode of writing" governs the contemporary writer.

He sees a split between the religious life and the "non-religious" or public life of the American individual today, and that split is reflected in literature.

In the ongoing discussion as to the nature and limitations of a Christian literature, this book provides not only valuable background for the religious situation, but also a way out for the Christian writer. Anyone concerned with literature, reader or writer, ought to read this book.

•

MICHIGAN HOT APPLES, Edited by Gay Rubin,

Bloomfield Hills, Mich.: Hot Apples Press. 106 pp., price $2.50.

This anthology represents writers who have attended a writers' conference organized by the Cranbrook Writers' Guild at least once. Every year during the past six years, the best creative writers from 35 Michigan colleges are selected to represent their school at the Cranbrook conference.

I had the privilege of attending one of these conferences and wondered whatever happened to the writers and poets who had come here. This welcome newcomer to the poetry market, intended as the first of an annual series, will show who did and who didn't survive.

The apple crop consists of three writers of fiction and some 35 poets — some red hot, others not-so-hot.

10 MICHIGAN POETS, Edited by Eric Greinke;

Grand Rapids, 1972; Pilot Press. 154 pp., price $3.50
Reviewed by ROBERT D. SWETS

The ten poets collected are Cor Barendrecht, Joseph Dionne, Albert Drake, Barbara Drake, L. Eric Greinke, John Knapp II, Ronnie M. Lane, Herbert Woodward Martin, E. W. Oldenburg and Barbara Robbins.

This is one of the best recent anthologies — partly because so much diverse material is brought together in one volume; partly because poets are for once represented in an anthology by more than three or four poems, and finally because it is a rarety: a large anthology of good contemporary poetry at a moderate price.

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Weighs only 12 lbs (less bar and chain)

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Ansodent is the denture cleanser that lets you smile with confidence. Special whiteners and brighteners clean dentures fast—in minutes . . . without brushing or overnight soaking. One capful removes stubborn stains . . . helps keep your mouth fresher, longer.
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"There's no doubt Hollandia cookies taste best. I recommend them!"
Hollandia
famous DUTCH STYLE COOKIES

HOLLANDIA COOKIES
MOUNT BRYDGES, ONTARIO

FROM THE DESK OF REV. J. D. TANGELDER

"What the church knows is something that the world cannot discover for itself. All the high-level conferences, the learned dialogues, the great books, will always fail to arrive at it."

Some modern churchmen claim that "to be acceptable to God does not require one to be a Christian." Conferences are held to discuss what the world religions have in common with one another. Dialogue in this new context means that a superficial basic common denominator between the world religions is propagated, a sort of compromise. We are all seeking the truth and God has revealed Himself also in non-Christian religions. Thus we must exchange views. Let us listen and discover on what basis we can meet each other. To study world religions is one thing. Each divinity student has to take a course in world religions. But to have a dialogue is another matter.

I suggest that the current discussions aand dialogues on religion on television and radio are generally but sheer entertainment. To have dialogues on a high level may be a very fine exchange of thought, but it leads to the betrayal of truth. Why? Our whole position as Christians is the very opposite and anti-thesis of the others, and is a complete condemnation of it. I say this not in conceit, arrogance or with pride. I must say this because there is no neutral ground at which the Christian and the non-Christian can meet. We have no basic common denominator.

The message of the gospel is unique. It claims that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life; the only way to God. The gospel is never a matter for debate or dialogue. It proclaims the good news that salvation for the world has come through Jesus Christ, the Son of the ever living God. The Christian message is the declaration of the good news of God, His being and power and glory. The God of the Scriptures is never an object for debate. We can never debate or discuss Him if He were but a philosophical proposition. The God of the Bible is above and beyond dialogue or philosophical debate. He is to be approached with "reverence and fear; for our God, indeed, is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:28,29.)

The Christian faith claims to be exclusive, and to have an authoritative message. Therefore, the Christian faith is missionary. And its message is not a private opinion derived from logic or a common place matter to be whispered in the ear, but an official declaration of supreme authority and universal importance to be broadcasted abroad. Jesus Christ did not give as His final command for His disciples to sit down at a round table conference with the leaders of the major religions of their day. He gave an order, clear, explicit: "Go then and make disciples of all the nations, baptize them into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to practice all the commands that I have given you." (Matthew 28:19,20.) And this command is binding upon His followers everywhere and for all time. Christians throughout the ages have taken very seriously these words of the Lord. Love for missions has burned like a holy fire in the hearts of missionaries. The message of the church must be proclaimed as the only hope for this world. We have a message as God gave it to us. In all humility Christians should treasure their good news received and spread it to others.

Let me be faithful to my trust,
Telling the world the story;
Press on my heart the woe,
Put in my feet the go;
Let me be faithful to my trust,
And use me for Thy glory."

From the Mailbox

•

CREATION

Dear Editor:

In the article "God is not a Professor" in the C.C. of Sept. 11, mention is made by Rev. Praamsma of two Ref. Prof. who believe that when it says in Gen. 2:7 that God formed man from the dust of the ground that it means that God build a model or dummy out of wet earth and by breathing into it made it a living human being.

That such a understanding of Gen. 2:7 is wrong is shown by the fact that when a grown-up person dies and his body returns to the dust that in the end the amount of dust that remains is very small.

It is impossible to build a full size human model out of this small amount of dust.

Most of the body is water and were it all collected after death and mixed with the small amount of dust that remained it would form a slurry so thin that in no way a dummy could be built out of it.

A much better explanation of Gen. 2:7 is to believe that God choose a spot of ground that was "wet" (original translation) because here were found all the elements together from which He was going to build the first human body.

The actual method by which the first human body was built is not spoken of in the Bible. The angels are God's servants who execute His will and do His commands. Perhaps it was one of them, who, by entering the earth (matter is no barrier to them) and by letting the power of God that once formed him, work on the water and the earth build a human body duplicating his. His form being the same as Gods. Gen. 18:2, 4, 8. 19:1-20.

Man was created in the image and likeness of God in heaven. Many years later the man Moses was commanded to build a copy or likeness of the house or tabernacle God lives in, in heaven. Ex. 25:9, 40. Hebr. 8:5, 23. In both cases that which is of matter copies that which is spirit.

Yours in Christ,
Can. Ref.
J. Vandenberg
503 Walnut Crescent
Burlington, Ontario

Dear Editor:

Thank you for sending me the letter of Mr. J. VandenBerg. When he tries to explain how God created man ("to believe that God chose a spot of ground which was wet"), he reasons in a way which has not been revealed in Scripture; much better are his following words: "The actual method by which the first human body was built is not spoken of in the Bible." This divine act should not be rationalized; creation is creation, that means it is a divine act which is beyond our rationalization; but we know that God created really in such a manner that man "was from the earth, a man of dust" (I Cor. 15:47), and that at the same time "the spirit of man goes upward" (Eccl. 3:21), having come from God and returning to Him (Eccl. 12:7). It is a vain thing to speculate about all the possibilities involved in the act of creation.

Mr. VandenBerg states that God has given laws for His creation, and I wholeheartedly agree.

He also states that miracles are according to His laws, and that they can many times be explained; I must honestly say that he knows more about miracles than I do; if he would say that miracles are according to His wisdom and power, and serve the purpose of showing His glory or His acts of salvation, I would shake hands with him.

Finally he states that God is a very good Professor; this reminds me of a current expression, namely that Jesus is a "Superstar"; in my view we should never speak about God that way. (cp. Is. 40:12-31).

Mr. VandenBerg makes it clear in his signature that he is Canadian Reformed; I would advise him to read the excellent articles of Rev. Joh. Francke in the Dutch magazine "De Reformatie" on: "Hoe prof. dr. B.J. Oosterhoff Genesis 2 en 3 leest". In these articles he finds a thorough analysis of the book under consideration.

Your sincerely,

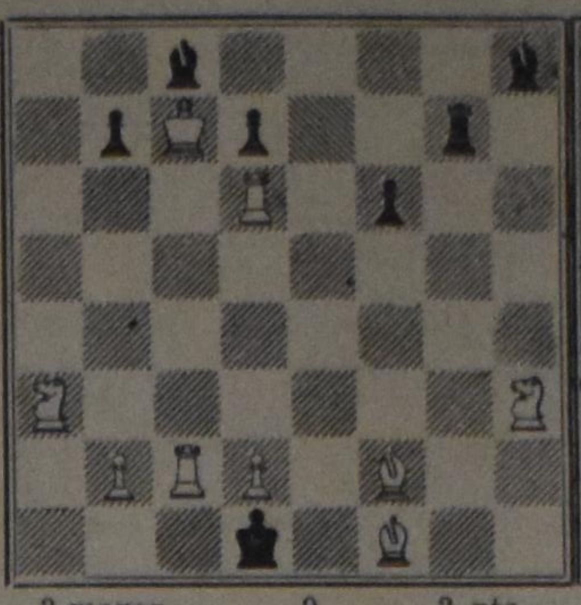
D. Praamsma

Let's Play Chess

Editor: Charlie Hess

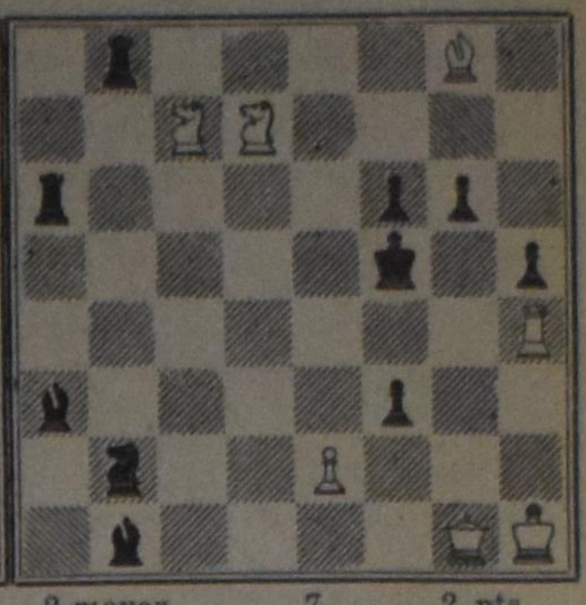
SECOND SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN OCTOBER

#502
P. M. Kofman, Russia 1948
7



3-mover 9 3 pts

#503
K. A. L. Kubbel, Russia 1928
10



2-mover 7 2 pts

Notes:

1. Although Boris Spassky lost his crown, we still may have full admiration for problems and endings made by Russian composers. Our second series this month is only Russian, which means that you will get something to chew on, maybe without resuult.....
2. #502 of Kofman is the most difficult one of the two. If you could cover square K2 a second time the whole case would be very simple, but that is exactly the case: black will not allow it. Key, threat, if any, plus ALL variations are asked for.
3. I put #503 in not because it is so hard but because of the very interesting character of this problem. Black lots of possibilities to defend; only in one case his various moves force white to mate. Key and threat, if any, are sufficient.
4. Please, wait another week, when something special will be published, before you mail your solutions to me.

REFORMED FELLOWSHIP

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION RALLY

OCTOBER 30, 31, NOVEMBER 1, 2, - 8:00 P.M.

TORONTO
Monday, October 30
Second C.R.C. of Toronto
265 Albion Rd., Rexdale
Chairman: Mr. J. Schaafsma

HAMILTON
Tuesday, October 31
First C.R.C. of Hamilton
181 Charlton Ave. W.
Chairman: Mr. K. Terpstra

LONDON
Wednesday, November 1
First C.R.C. of London
513 Talbot St.
Chairman: Rev. P. Borgdorff

SPEAKER: Dr. Peter Y. DeJong, Pastor First Sioux Center C.R.C., Iowa

THEME:

Reformation and the Educational Crisis

Message in Music: Local choirs: "Praise the Lord" — Brampton Mixed Choir • "The Ambassadors" — Hamilton Male Choir • "Crescendo" — St. Thomas Male Choir • Special Numbers and Community Singing

Thunder Bay, Ont.
Thursday, November 2
First Christian
Reformed Church

Speakers: Rev. L. T. Schalkwijk and Rev. J. Tangelder
Theme:
HOW RELIABLE ARE THOSE BIBLE STORIES?

If the Lord moves you to help along in these and other Reformed Fellowship Rallies, send your gift to "Reformed Fellowship of Canada", c/o Mr. G. J. Van Daalen, 242 Elmhurst Dr., Rexdale, Ont.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Pay your advertisement when you send it in. See our standard-rates below:

Birth announcements $4.50
Marriage and Engagement announcements $6.00
Anniversary announcements $8.00
Notifications of death $6.00

"For Sale" and "Want" advertisements up to 25 words $4.00. Every word more 15¢.

For "letters under number" $1.00 extra.

Send your payment together with your ad to:

Calvinist-Contact
Box 312, Station B, Hamilton, Ont.

KAREN JOANNE

is proud to announce that she has become the new born daughter of

BILL & HELEN VANDERWAL (nee REITSMA)

and hopes to celebrate her birthday every year on September 21.

Besides having happy parents she has five beaming brothers and sisters.

3841 Carey Rd., Victoria, B.C.

We are happy to announce the birth of our first child

JANA LOUISE

Born Sept. 21, 1972.

We thank our God for her safe arrival.

Andy & Gerda Vander Kloet

119 Lakeport Rd., St. Catharines, Ont.

With joy and thanks to our God we announce the birth of our son and brother

JOHN ERIC

Born October 1st, 1972.

DR. & MRS. W. B. KROEZE (nee DE WEERD)
Karen, Hank, Ruby

132 Forest Hill Drive, Kitchener, Ont.

With thanks to God we announce the birth of our son

WALTER TYA

born Oct. 4, 1972, weight 8 lbs. 4 oz. A brother for Elisa and Johnny.

John & Henny Vander Kolk

R.R. 2, Fruitland, Ont.

Oldeboorn 1912 — R.R. 5, Waterford 1972

Zo de here wil hopen wij op 17 Oct. 1972 met onze ouders, grootouders en overgrootouders

JAN LENOS
en
ROELOFJE LENOS JENINGA

De dag te herdenken dat God hen 60 jaar in het huwelijk heeft gespaard.

Hun dankbare kinderen:

Hinke & Rinke Van Der Meulen, Tijnje, Friesland
Hotze & Roely Lenos, San Marcos, Californie
Alie & Frans Koen, Andyk, N. Holland
Neeltje Lenos, Nelson, B.C.
Geesje & Wiebe De Vries, Nanticoke, Ont.
Tryntje & Pier Van Der Meer, Hagersville, Ont.
Hottie & Wiebe Cnossen, Caledonia, Ont.
Niek & Hilly Lenos, Waterford, Ont.
Hammie & Tjitte De Boer, Hagersville, Ont.
Bob & Nancy Lenos, Jarvis, Ont.
48 kleinkinderen
26 achter kleinkinderen

Gelegenheid te feliciteren 17 Oct. 1972 in de Hagersville Community Hall, 's avonds van 8 - 10 uur.

1947 — 1972

Thankful to the Lord we hope to celebrate the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents

AREND SMEDING
and
JOHANNA G. H. (BLOKZIJL)

Colossians 3:15

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts . . . And be ye thankful."

Walter, Diane, Alice Marg, Jo-Anne, Ralph, Arthur, Ricky

Oakville, Ont.

Grateful to the Lord and with much happiness we hope to celebrate on Oct. 21, 1972, the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

JOHN JAMES JONKER
and
HEIKA EILINA JONKER (BULTHUIS)

Jantje Jonker, Appingedam, Holland
Jim and Jeanette Jonker, Innerkip, Ont.
Fred and Pat Jonker, Brampton, Ont.
Lucas and Fenie Jonker, Loppersum, Holland
John and Maria Jonker, Beachville, Ont.
Henny and Lucy Vandersluis, Georgetown, Ont.
Jim and Sue Jonker, Woodstock, Ont.
Bill and Ruth Anne Jonker, Port Elgin, Ont.
and 15 grandchildren

We would like to thank our many friends for the gifts, flowers, and cards of congratulations we received. They have helped to make our 50th wedding anniversary such a happy occasion.

Mr. and Mrs. Cornelis Heemskerk

R.R. #1, Monkland, Ontario

CLARENCE & RENE VISSER (nee ELGERSMA)

wish to express their sincere thanks for the many tokens of love and friendship received on the occasion of their 25th wedding anniversary, October 1, 1972.

R.R. #1, Millgrove, Ont.

Heden bereikte ons het droeve bericht van het door een tragisch ongeval overlijden van onze geliefde schoonzuster en tante

MARIEKA TAKACS

echtgenote van Matthys Spoelstra.

Uit aller naam:
Peter Spoelstra
Clara Spoelstra - Elgersma

Correspondentie adres:
Zrinyi — Ucta 10
Dönsöd, Hungary

September, 1972

Op 4 October 1972 werd door de Heere tot zich genomen ons oudste lid

AALDERICK GEERT SMIT,

echtgenoot van Grietje Flikkema in de ouderdom van 78 jaar.

Hij wenste ontbonden te worden en met Christus te zijn.

De Bijbel Studie Club van de Christian Reformed Church of Wyoming, Ontario

---

On October 4, 1972 the Lord took home our Dear Friend and Brother in Christ

TED POSTHUMUS

"We will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall their be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away." Rev. 21:4.

Our prayer for Hilda, his wife, the three children, and the Posthumus family is that they may find their comfort and strength in the Lord.

Theo & Nancy Hulshof

1228 Logan
Sarnia, Ont.

The Lord took to Himself through a tragic accident, my dear employer and friend

WIETSE (TED) POSTHUMUS

May the Lord comfort his wife, Hilda and her children, and his parents.

John Klazinga,
Camlachie, Ont.

Oct. 4, 1972

On Oct. 6th Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom suddenly called home through a tragic accident our dear grandson, nephew and cousin

JAMES BRIAN ELGERSMA

dear son of

JAKE & ADA ELGERSMA

in his 4th year

It is our prayer that Him who gives and Him who takes will also comfort and strengthen them.

Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. Matthew 19 - 14.

Pake:
George Muizelaar, Waterford, Ont.
Uncles & Aunts
Ray & Alice Muizelaar
Ruth & Peter Hogeterp
David & Jane Muizelaar
and Cousins

Jarvis, Ont.

The consistory of the Jarvis Christian Reformed Church wishes to express its sympathy to Youth elder Jake Elgersma and family with the sudden death of their little son

JAY

May God bear them up under this burden.

1 Cor. 15:42b-44a

The consistory

October 6, 1972

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh.

Suddenly on Oct. 6, 1972 our Lord took up unto His eternal home,

JAY

Dear son of our counsellor Ada.

We pray that our merciful God will grant comfort and peace to Jake and Ada, Mark and Glenn.

Remembered by
Calvinettes and Counsellors
of Jarvis, Ont.

The Young Couples Club of Jarvis Ebenezer C.R.C. wishes to express their sincere Christian sympathy to their fellow members, Jake and Ada Elgersma in the loss of their little son

JAY

at the tender age of 3 years on Friday, Oct. 6, 1972.

Psalm 55:2.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, He shall never let the righteous be moved".

On October 5, 1972 the Lord took home our beloved wife and mother

ALBERTJE BOSMAN (nee TEN HOVE)

at the age of 45 years

The assurance that she is now with Jesus, our Saviour comforts us.

S. BOSMAN
ALBERT & GRETA

The funeral took place on October 10, 1972, at 1:30 p.m. at the Richard's Memorial United Church, 360 Edgeworth, London, Ontario.

Rev. J. VanHarmelen of the Bethel Christian Reformed Church officiated.

The Lord took up unto His Eternal Home after a long illness our beloved sister and aunt

ALBERTI BOSMAN (nee TEN HOVE)

at the age of 45

Psalm 121:8.

We pray that the Heavenly Father will comfort and strengthen our brother and children.

Oct. 5, 1972.

J. K. Bosman
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Miss T. Bosman, Assen, Holland
Mr. & Mrs. K. J. Bosman
Wiesje and Pier (Petra and Bertje)
Bert, Henk,
Jan Kornelis, Grijpskerk, Holland
Miss B. Bosman, Groningen, Holland
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From the Mailbag

Christian Political Concern

"Ye are the salt of the earth".

Only for the sake of Christians the world is not destroyed by Almighty God. In His Providential care He restrains evil so that His children might be able to exist on earth. The external peace, prosperity and security experienced by a believer in a nation is directly dependent on the degree to which Christians serve God and their neighbor by righting the wrongs, resisting evil, rebuking the wicked and exhorting the saints. It is our lack of action in this field which will usher in tyranny. Only when we follow explicitly the Word of God and apply it to every facet of life can we develop a distinct, unique Christian culture which can stand in complete opposition as a light to the moral and spiritual degeneracy rapidly destroying our social, political and economic units of society today.

Everything that comes to a man, all the signals that he receives is filtered by his world-view, which gives meaning to reality by organizing facts for us into a picture thought. Therefore, every man has a bias. The inferences he picks up from facts are all colored by his basic ideology. Contrary to present day education and philosophy, only normative knowledge is permanent and values must come before facts.

A Christian must view all signals he receives through the spectacles of scripture. Any other filter is man made, thus being full of holes and dark spots distorting his vision. If you want Canada to have sound government, then demand this world-view of the candidate you select, for from this world-view come principles and policies which will guide him in proper action.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers. Satan is working on the minds of men the same as Christ wants to create a new mind in you. Beware of the candidate who says he is pragmatic. Pragmatism borders on nihilism which simply means that the person has no use for principles, beliefs, culture or traditions of the past but gropes in the present for something that "works" and hopes to perpetuate the present. This is completely contrary to scripture and according to scripture, that man is a fool, for practice is not normative. There is a vast difference between a practical man and a pragmatist. Most old line parties brag about being pragmatic and this is why they have no policy, make errors, put the criminal before the citizen, play spin the bottle with right and wrong and this is why the M.P.s play musical chairs between parties hoping to win. The will to power is the only guide post. The party seeks power entirely for its own sake.

Another danger among Chrisians is one of tolerance and compromise. Tolerance is definitely a worthwhile virtue but if you go beyond certain limits it becomes a vice for then you will not take a stand, weak or firm, against the evil and corruption of the day. As for compromise, when we have "thus saith the Lord", we must stand firm. If we do not, then we will whittle Christ down to the size of anti-Christ, say and do nothing, while the Reds and the devil work and shout us into totalitarianism. Select the candidate whose tolerance and compromise are within scriptural limits.

Christians are being deceived by the cry that winning at the polls is the all important thing. However, the most important work of the Christian community is one of witness. Therefore, our major concern must be that of standing for the principles of Christianity as a witness, not winning at the polls. If a Christian candidate is running and definitely stands in Christ, then vote for him. Don't be misled by the statement that we must vote for the Conservatives to get rid of Fabian Trudeau. Any candidate not founded on the Word of God is Fabian and anti-Christ regardless of label. To replace one humanistic pragmatist with another is like replacing the "A" bomb with an "H" bomb. Both end with destruction.

The false dilemma between socialism and capitalism is also being used to mislead the Christian in his political thinking. If one takes a careful look, capitalism suffered from greed of profit resulting in exploitation of the worker. Socialism seeks profit and money for the worker at the expense of the employee. Both are evil. Both are man centered. Only a God centered approach will solve the employer-employee relationship as outlined in Ephesians. The scriptural view of society is one where every social unit is equal, independent and has its own sphere of authority. Each sphere then is limited by its role in society. It is from these relationships that freedom and authority exist. This authority is received from God alone.

Christian, only when we start to apply the teachings of Christ to all of life will we make an impact on the nation. One way to start is to learn all you can about your candidates, having them to a meeting in your home or church so that you can question them and demand of them an unfailing loyalty to Christ and His Word. Then the blessing of God will rest on us again.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. What are these things? Food, clothing, peace, joy and unity.

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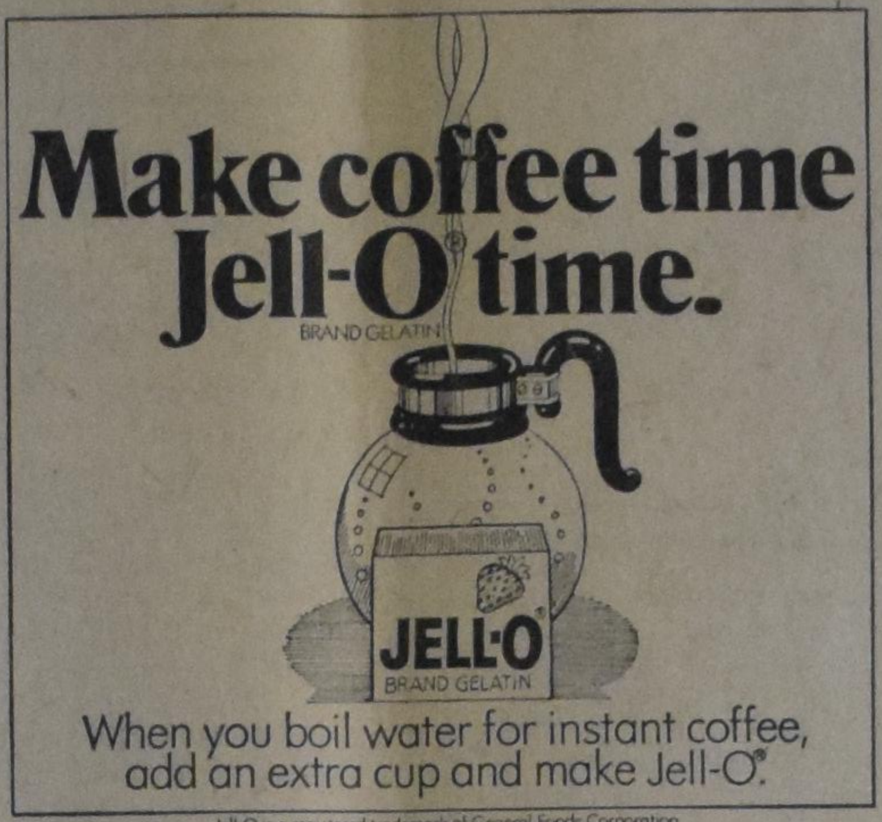

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